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Christianity and our times.

CHRISTIANITY AND OUR TIMES.

—BY—

R. P. BRORUP.

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CHICAGO
INTERNATIONAL BOOK CO.
1895.

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SERMONS

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CHAPTER I.

EVOLUTION IN RELIGION.

"My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord." (Isaiah.)

It may be stated as a preliminary, that this and succeeding chapters are not concerned about definitions and interpretations of a denominational character. The religious discussion of to-day has passed beyond these. The question is now about the facts, or what have been regarded as such, rather than their interpretation. It is the foundation which God has laid that is assailed rather than the superstructure which men have built upon it. Nice definitions and interpretations of the Bible arouse but little attention. The question is about the Bible itself, and the facts of which it is believed to be a record. It is not so much a battle of different creeds, as a battle about that which is the foundation in all creeds. It is so understood by churches in general. Outposts of a denominational character are little defended, and assaults upon them are carelessly regarded. There are no heretics of a denominational character, only as they attack that which is fundamental in all creeds do they gain attention.

The modern theory of evolution as applied to religion has reference to this fundamental view of it. It is not merely our understanding of religion that is sup-

posed to be subject to development and improvement, but it is religion itself that is evolving and progressing. This is supposable on two conditions; first, that the facts in religion have not been all discovered, or else that religion itself is but a product of the age.

The latter is the ground of the Materialist. He may confess that religion is useful as a matter of moral restraint, or as a sentiment beautifying life and giving color to it; but that beyond this there is nothing in it, that it is not founded on facts, but is a product of human nature combined with the conditions of life. Holding this view it is consistent to argue that religion may change in harmony with the age. It becomes then but an appendage to the existing civilization, the net result of sentiments and customs. A plant not planted by the heavenly Father and which "can not be rooted up," but an ephemeral sprout, sprung from the sentiments, affections and passions of humanity, tempered by time and circumstances; the superficial garment which we change with the weather, an accidental upturning of evolution, development and progress.

While some of our evolutionists hold this view of religion, others are Deists, and some profess to be Christians. To these it belongs to show facts on which to base their conclusions. We boast of the progress of science, and with reason, for new facts have been and are discovered continually in all the branches of science, and their practical application makes progress possible, theoretically as well as practically. But what new religious fact has been discovered on which to base religious progress. In regard to morals, the fundamentals were known as long ago as we have any knowledge. The ten commandments answer as well to-day as in the time of

Moses, the summary of the moral law announced by Moses and emphasized by Christ "to love God with all our heart, mind and strength, and our neighbor as ourself" is broad enough even for our age.

Broadly distinguished, there are two sources from which religious facts or knowledge may be obtained,—first, what God has revealed to us directly, and what he has revealed to us indirectly through nature around us and within. Reason, itself, is not a source; we must first know of things before we can reason about them. In regard to nature around us, it suggests an almighty, creative power, its beauty, harmony, grandeur and awfulness suggest like characteristics in the creative being. This the ancients fully appreciated, the heavens have always "declared the glory of God and the firmament showed his handiwork." "When I consider the heavens the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars which thou hast ordained; what is man"—how humble in comparison with the power manifested, and naturally how disposed to bow in reverence and worship the Creator. So man observed and reasoned and caught the inspiration from the beginning of his creation.

Human nature within has been the same in all ages. Adam and Eve exhibited it in the same manner as we. Ideas of right and wrong, the impelling or restraining force of conscience, the faculties and emotions of love, hate, fear, etc., have been the same as far back as we have any record. The dual nature in man with opposing tendencies were understood even before St. Paul so vividly described it. Men, blinded by sin and passion, have denied to the better part of their nature, growth and development, and so they are doing to-day probably in no less degree.

In regard to a direct revelation from God, the Bible is the only record of such which is admitted. This record was completed 1800 years ago. It has been what it was meant to be—a revelation. The ancients who had a mind for the things of God understood it as well as we do. Attempts materially to alter their interpretation have proved failures, admitted to be so by those who have made such attempts. It has been tried by Unitarians and like bodies, but proved too hard on their sense of honesty and was abandoned. The authority of the Bible was finally set aside, and reason,—or what goes by that name,—was given the supreme place.

Whatever the source of information or knowledge we must insist on facts or actual discoveries as a basis for the supposed evolution in religion, just as much as we would if the question was about evolution in science. The ideas that chase each other in men's minds, the opinions and factions, the theories and speculations that imagination is starting up at every turn, all this is only the vagaries common to every age, and will not do as the basis for actual progress, nor as proof that it has been accomplished.

The two most important religious doctrines are those of the Supreme Being and the immortality of the soul. It is thinkable that facts might be discovered that would actually increase our knowledge with regard to these two doctrines. But has such been the case, has science or progress helped us to solve any of the mysteries of God and the soul's immortality; have our immense telescopes discovered the spirit world, the throne of the Eternal, and bid faith become sight? It will be answered that we understand more of God's creation, doubtless, but do we understand more of the nature of God and our relation

to him; have the men of science of to-day arrived to a better comprehension of God, a clearer understanding of their relation to him, and a more intimate realization of this relation? Men of science as a general thing do not claim much in this direction; some of them have come to the conclusion that there is no God; in more cases they declare that if there be a God we do not know anything about him, nor can we know; others profess in very fact to believe there is a God, but do not believe we sustain any relation to him, or can realize such a thing. Something besides science and progress will evidently be needed if we are to get ahead of Moses, Elijah or St. Paul in our knowledge of God and the realization of his presence and power. Taking the testimony of science, God is more unknowable now than ever before. If scientists worship at all, it is "mostly before the altar of the unknowable." Those of them that do in fact profess to know of God are content to learn of Moses, Isaiah, St. Paul or Christ.

If we consider the other great religious doctrine, that of the soul's immortality, what do our theologians of to-day know on this subject from the light of nature that Plato did not know and argue 2,000 years ago; or what do they know of it from the light of revelation that St. Paul did not know and argue 1,800 years ago. We have science and progress and liberal ideas—what information have they furnished us on this subject. The doctrine of the soul's immortality, together with that of a Supreme Being, that concerns himself about us, are fundamental in all religions. Knowledge and discoveries on these subjects would be gratefully received; and judging from the pretensions of the new departure we would suppose their theologians had at last cleared up these old

mysteries so essential to faith and morals. Have any of our new theologians had a peep behind the veil that was not vouchsafed to former generations. The interest in the future world is immense, even charlatans are heard when they pretend to speak knowingly on this subject; millions stand waiting with bated breath for someone to declare to us the certainty. St. Paul was caught up to the third heaven and heard words that it is not lawful for man to utter, have any of our "new lights" been caught up to heaven and seen that "they were all there," or down to the other place and seen the fires extinguished, so that they might bid the wicked take courage, and dispute established doctrines on the ground of personal or superior knowledge. But alas, for their efforts not a scrap of additional knowledge has been forthcoming. Differences in opinion, now as ever, are the result of differences in sentiment and different degrees of faith. Evolution has evolved nothing, development developed nothing, progress has left us in regard to the subject where we were thousands of years ago. We may believe the Bible, and take the hints of nature and so might our ancestors as far back as we have any knowledge.

People of to-day in the pride of their achievements in the field of science and material progress, scorn the idea that an age that is past should be permitted to do the thinking for them on any subject. But the Almighty has claimed the right to do some thinking for us, and made it known even to former generations for our benefit. His thoughts are not evanescent, they are not apt to become obsolete. "God's thoughts are not like men's thoughts, nor his ways like our ways." Some of his thoughts about men are not complimentary, some of his precepts not to their taste, and some of his warn-

ings are alarming. We have the liberty to disregard his thoughts and perhaps to do so will seem to widen the gate and broaden the way before us, but Christ says the end of that way is perdition.

It was necessary that the Creator should thus from the very beginning declare to man his thoughts and reveal to him both his own nature and man's nature, their mutual relation, and the possibilities before man. He had a soul to save as well as we, and the Creator was interested in him as much as in us. He could not afford to let him go groping till he had accidentally stumbled upon the knowledge, or till evolution and progress had turned it up somewhere along in the ages. The steam engine and electric light might thus be left as contingencies, but "the light which lighted every man that cometh into the world" and the road to heaven could not be left to man's ingenuity and invention to discover. We must believe that God has done for man what he could in this respect from the very beginning, and that ignorance is due to sin, and the fact that men "do not desire the knowledge of God."

The evolution theory is not only applied to religion itself; but also to the human race, its social, moral and religious development. It is really but two ways of presenting the same question. In the express words of a leading evolutionist: "The theory of evolution involves the belief that from the beginning to end it goes on irresistibly and unconsciously." The force behind this supposed movement may be conceived to be God, or something inherent in nature, according to the faith of the theorist. It is the Calvinistic doctrine of predestination worked over, mainly by those who have become impressed with it by early associations. Being dissatis-

fied with the old form of belief, and yet having the idea ingrafted in them, they set to work to give it a shape that better suited their temperament. The principle is the same but the result looked for is different. Presbyterians believe they find their doctrine in the Bible. Evolutionists take it for granted that religious and moral evolution is bound up with material progress and increase of knowledge, though history more often presents the two as moving in opposite directions. As in the words quoted above, this evolution is believed to be from beginning to end an unconscious movement in a straight line, including the whole race, we are in it whether we would or not and whether we are conscious of it or not. It would occur to one at once, that this irresistible, all-controlling something would relieve the individual of a great responsibility, both in regard to himself and the world's progress. We are told, however, that our volitions, motives, desires and actions are part of it—as wheels in a clock-work, but it remains as much a clock-work as before the explanation. Absolute irresistible sovereignty and free moral agency, it is the old enigma which philosophers have tried in vain to solve so as to make it look consistent with reason and the facts of which we are conscious. The Presbyterian doctrine of predestination has been accused of cruelty and the like; the evolutionists do not err on that side. They have not been hampered by any revelation of Scripture and are but little inconvenienced by the revelation of facts. They ask themselves what results are desired, and behold —it is granted. It is that "larger hope," which would have us hope that sin and evil is not what it is seen, felt and declared to be. Unfortunately for their theory, the world of facts does not work in harmony with it. The

world in history and at present look very much as though free moral agents of indifferent character have had the control of it and shaped it, rather than some irresistible power supposed to be beneficent and overruling everything, including the action of free moral agents. The world and its history look as though men have in very fact been free and done about "as they listed." The ugliness of sin is more conspicuous than the beauty of holiness, the ruins and wastes of a demoralized race are strewn all along the ages. It is not a concerted movement, but opposing movements. There has been no irresistible, all-controlling power, preventing man from crossing God's plan of goodness and marring his creation. No uniform result is produced, but on the contrary, results as far apart as the east is from the west; spots of heaven here, and bottomless pits of hell there. Such things as hells could never have been possible within the boundaries of God's creation, unless corrupt beings were free to act out their own characters and destiny, in spite of supreme goodness. Perhaps we are told that all these ugly facts are but dreams that will vanish. We have to do only with what we know, the facts of the present and past. We can judge of the future only in the light of what we know or have known. Of these there has been nothing more impressive than sin and pain. This is the realization that keeps us interested and awake in spite of ourselves. Pain will convince us that there is no mistake about it. We might dream away heaven and happiness, the true and the beautiful, and make believe they are inrealities, but not sin, pain and misery.

Excited imaginings of the future of this earth are common nowadays, but whatever of progress there may be, it will remain true that our life in this world, as well

as the world itself, is but a temporary affair, liable to be snuffed out like a candle any time. We are told to look for revelations of wonder both in the religious and scientific world, the future even one or ten thousand years hence is held up to view. We will not have to wait so long for new revelations of all kind. The future world so near on hand, will have new revelations far surpassing anything this world can ever offer, and being so much nearer on hand than the distant future of this world, it ought to concern us the more, and we ought to look for it in the light of the revelations which Christ said should endure till heaven and earth pass away. We find ministers of the gospel excited over evolution and progress, and spoiling what little they might do to better the world for vain imaginings of what evolution is going to bring about a hundred years hence. What if God again should come down and confound our Babel which we are boasting to build up into heaven, as more than once in ages past, obliterating rising and prosperous civilizations so that even their knowledge and inventions, largely, have perished and some of it not yet re-discovered.

Revelation speaks in general terms about the future of the human race, not as setting boundaries that would imply limitations to man's freedom of action, but rather as predictions in the form of calculations based on tendencies and forces within and outside of man, the general result weighed and balanced by the highest wisdom. Isaiah paints the future of the church in glowing imagery. Christ speaks in plain terms of increasing wickedness to the end of time. There is no contradiction between the two. The church of God's saints is one thing, "the world" is another, the Bible never confounds the two. Humanity is not moving in one

direction, individuals are all the time choosing and going in opposite directions. The general tendency of human nature is downward, it takes supernatural force to arrest this tendency and turn it in the opposite direction. This force is a moral influence which men may resist and by resisting lose it. Whenever this force has been lacking, nations and civilizations have gone down rapidly and sometimes perished in their corruption. We believe truth and righteousness will have victories in the future as in the past, and such will be needed to arrest moral degeneration. Mere knowledge, scientific and otherwise, is a power that is enlisted in the service, both of good and evil, and used effectually by both. Discoveries and knowledge rather tend to intensify the struggle than to make certain the result. Wealth, like knowledge, is a power both for good and evil. Enormous increase of wealth is more generally a two-edged sword on the side of evil, on the one hand a means of oppression, on the other of luxury and self-indulgence. Material development inevitably results in increased density of population, which creates new problems and increases dangers; with all our knowledge and skill, we have scarcely been able this last quarter of a century, to meet the dangers and solve the problems as fast as they have arisen. History and present experience are decidedly against the presumption that any or all the factors of material progress, will insure a moral redemption of the race. To know how the future of the world will be, we must wait and see how men will act. It is the free moral force in man that will make the world what it is going to be in the future as it has in the past, there is no other factor or inherent necessity that will decide the result. We do not forget that God is a factor in the life and destiny of

the human race, but reason demands it to be taken for granted he has done the very best he could in the past, if the world has been wicked in the past in spite of all God could do, it may continue to be so in the future if it choose.

CHAPTER II.

MORAL DIFFICULTIES IN THE OLD TESTAMENT.

"The grass withereth, the flower fadeth; but the word of our God shall stand for ever." Isaiah.

It does not come within the scope of this chapter to examine criticism of historical portions of the Old Testament, except in a general way, only as what is recorded as facts can be proved false, has it a bearing upon the moral quality.

Modern criticism is concerned about the truth and reliability of the history of the Bible, the books themselves and the account they give. It is a question of infinite detail and boundless room for difference of opinion and controversy. The critcism, although the critics are many, may very well be viewed as a whole, for although opinions differ widely on many points, there are certain broad characteristics and agreements as to main results. A Christian inquiring as to the value of this criticism, could not afford at once to occupy himself with the details of it, this would take time and in some respects special training. But he would, from his knowledge and comprehension of the spirit and text of the Bible, be eminently fit to judge of the general character both of the critics and their criticism. He would be able to tell whether the general tone and expression of the criticism is such as inspires confidence in the single-

ness of aim, the impartiality and disinterested love of truth on the part of the critic, for this is above all things demanded, and a critic cannot be one without pretending to it. It should also be asked whether the critic has a fair comprehension of the spirit of the book he is criticising, and whether or not he is constitutionally opposed to the general claim of the Bible as a special revelation from God, and perhaps unable to comprehend it as a record of supernatural manifestations; if this were the case, he would be both unwilling and unfit to investigate the claim. As to disinterestedness and impartiality where religion is concerned, it may as well be taken for granted, from general experience, that there is none. Men may be disinterested and impartial in treating of politics or science, but we never saw a disinterested statement about religion or the Bible. It touches the most vital part of man's nature and he will be interested as Christ said " he that is not for me is against me." In general it is true that the critics who are most profuse in their profession of friendliness and disinterestedness are the most virulent in their prejudices and opposition to the Bible. This prejudice and opposition to the spirit and text of the Bible is cropping out continually in their treatment of the subject, and the professionalism of the critic, which naturally engenders pride, conceit and vanity, tends to strengthen it. To find an occasion and make a point is the aim, and no profession was ever more skillful in making out an occasion and profit by it. That truth may be found in spite of prejudice and constitutional disadvantages is admitted, but the presumption against their efforts as a whole is naturally strong.

It may seem unjust to treat the critics as a class, it is true that they are not equally opposed to Christianity,

but neither can they be said to have accepted it, they may therefore be viewed as a class outside the Christian faith. A critical investigation of the Bible involves an attitude of doubt and suspense, which is inconsistent with the claim of acceptance. We must first be through with our investigation and arrive at definite conclusions before we can be said to have accepted it. It is perhaps the most serious charge against the whole class that they do not as a general thing take their place where they belong. Nearly all profess themselves Christians, while they are yet investigating the claims of Christianity upon their acceptance. They excuse their inconsistency by telling us, that no matter what may or may not be true, there will always be some truth and some kind of a Christ left us. But this is not the question. What is generally left them in the process of their investigation, is a residuum of historical truth and moral precepts. This is not the Christian religion, it is not religion or Christianity at all, even when it is coupled with the name and person of some kind of a Christ. Christianity purports to include a scheme of redemption, the plan and purpose of which is revealed through the prophets, and finally by God himself appearing in this world as "the word made flesh and dwelling among us." The connecting links of this plan begins at the very creation with the fall and corruption of man, and ends only with the dissolution of all things earthly. The value of Christianity in connection with the moral law is rather that of sanction than revelation, We may know the moral law without Christianity, but we could not know that God would in the other world sit in judgment upon our acts, and that the consequences of them would be eternal bliss or woe. Of no less importance is the revelation of God

as a Spirit in the world, it reveals to us the fact that we can have communion with God, be conscious of his presence and power in our own soul and in those around us. Both the Old and new Testaments are saturated with this teaching. It is holiness and communion with God, far above any morality. When those, therefore, who have nothing left of the Bible but a residuum of historical truths and moral precepts, profess themselves believers in Christianity and its religion, they are dishonest, for they could not be honestly ignorant of the fact, that this is neither Christianity nor religion.

A Christian may have sufficient confidence in his faith to investigate the claims of the critics without losing his character as a Christian. But in so far as he assumes the attitude of the critic, that of an investigator, his faith is suspended, and his character as a Christian impaired, he must wait for results of his investigation before his faith can become settled. There is no virtue in pretending to a faith that is a mere state of idle passivity; but the Scriptures take it for granted that the evidence is sufficient to warrant the strongest faith of an intelligent moral character; a state of doubt and suspense is ascribed to sin and moral weakness. That this is the state of very many Christians nowadays is apparent, and the effort to change their position everytime the critics cry "lo here, or lo there" is painful. Those who depend upon the critics to settle their faith and determine for them what to believe, may have to wait long, and it is not likely that their faith will at any time be sufficiently strong or settled to remove mountains, nor a molehill. The critics are not concerned about having the faith settled, if it should become settled their vocation would be gone, and this is a principal consideration.

If it is merely a question of finding occasions for doubt or disputes, such can scarcely ever be lacking. In regard to many questions, evidence cannot be adduced after this lapse of time that will compel belief. In such cases the natural bias of the disputant is apt to determine his convictions. The believer will fall back on his faith in inspiration. Those on the other hand who are not in sympathy with the spirit of the Bible, will easily make out a case against it. A more or less airy hypothesis, will, in their eyes, assume the shape of a solid demonstration; the objection that can be made to appear plausible, will at once be accepted as proved; whatever is not quite plain, will be seen as an insurmountable obstacle, and difficulties will be aggravated with care and skill. One cannot fail to perceive these characteristics in the writings of the critics, and their defenders, for they are conspicuously apparent.

But besides the question of the truthfulness of Old Testament history, and its moral import, there is an account to be given of the morality of the Old Testament times as practiced by those whom God endorsed as worthy of favor. Of course, the question does not concern itself about the morality of the ancients apart from God's approval or toleration, it might be what it would aside from this, but when those who are said to have been recipients of divine favor practiced certain things of which we disapprove, it is natural to ask for an explanation. Of course many have been given, but there may be room for one more.

First in regard to social purity, we find from the Bible and other accounts, that the ancients were not inferior to those of modern times in their appreciation of

virtue, and detestation of vice. Their laws against impurity and their praise of virtue prove this. But what then about the practice of polygamy; it was not contrary to their ideas of virtue and purity. Then their ideas were faulty, doubtless, but it is one thing to have faulty ideas, and conform to a low standard, it is another thing to practice what we know and believe to be wrong. Let the objector imagine himself back among the ancients when polygamy was the common custom and try to convince the patriarch that his family life is immoral. The patriarch demands the proof, how will our modern objector furnish it? He cannot prove that polygamy is wrong in the same sense that theft or murder is wrong, for the polygamist takes nothing either by force or fraud that belongs to anyone else. He might urge that it offends his sense of what is proper. But what right has he to make his sense of propriety a standard for others, especially for those of another land and age. Suppose the polygamist offend nobody's sense of propriety and that nobody sees anything objectionable in it. The objector might urge again that it is not according to the highest ideas of home life, that it does not develop the home relations to that perfection of which they are capable. But here again he makes his own feelings and sympathies the standard, the polygamist might simply answer, that their ideas differ, that he has a right to judge from his own feelings and experience rather than from that of the objector, and that he believes happiness and purity is obtainable in his case as well as in that of the other. He steals nobody's property, offends nobody's sense of propriety, his wives are in sympathy with him, are not conscious of any wrong done them. How is our modern objector going to pro-

secute his case and convince the patriarch except of this, that their feelings and ideas differ.

What may really be said of the patriarchal custom is, that it is the characteristic of a low level. God in his Word had set before men the higher standard; he had pictured Eden as the abode of one man with one wife; he had made no provision for polygamy, but in his arrangement as well as in his words put it out of sight. Man degenerated to a lower level and this with other customs characteristic of a low level became the consequence.

How God may tolerate what he does not approve of, may be seen and illustrated by the case of civil government among the Jews. God had set before the people as his standard, a republic, founded on preference for wisdom and virtue. But the people were unable to maintain this high standard of government, and God—not without protest—allowed them the government characteristic of a lower level, namely, the despotism of a king. Why has not our modern objector discovered the incompatibility of allowing this as well as polygamy and bondage? Only because the low level in regard to government is so near our own time that we have not yet become greatly impressed with the offense against a high standard of life involved in this kind of government. Yet the absolute rule of one man over a multitude of his fellows, the average of which are his equals and some of them his superiors in wisdom and virtue, is an offence against social and civil life as great as that of polygamy or bondage. But the government of a despotism is better than no government, better than anarchy, and the family relation of polygamy is better than no family, and not much worse than the free love tend-

encies of our age. For this reason we can believe that David was good although both a despot and a polygamist, and that God was good who gave him credit for goodness. We bear with man's infirmities due to ignorance aud the influence of surroundings; but if he sin against light and knowledge, then there is an end of excuse. There is a distinction between what is lower, compared with what is higher and that which cannot fail to be absolutely wrong under all circumstances. The ancients never had any doubt of difference as to what is absolutely wrong, such as murder, theft, adultery, perjury and the like. If we had found in the Bible that any of these had been condoned by God, or practiced with impunity by men whom the Bible calls good, the case would have been clear and no defense attempted.

The lower becomes unpardonable when brought into contact with the higher and still persisted in. When a community like that of the Mormons persist in practicing polygamy in spite of warnings and a better example, it is right that the state should interfere, for it is a crime deliberately to lower ourselves in the scale of being.

In regard to slavery, we may in the first place dispose of what in our age is understood by slavery, as it has been known in our Southern States. The negroes were stolen from their homes in Africa, and known to be stolen or forced; they were bought by the slave-holders. The law of Moses provides that " He that stealeth a man, and selleth him, or if he be found in his hand he shall surely be put to death." This passage pronounces sentence of death on all the former slave-holders in the South, for the stolen negroes or their descendants were found in their hands.

What may, properly speaking, be called slaves, either among the Jews or surrounding nations were captives taken in war. It was a law of war among the nations, that when an enemy surrendered himself, his life was surrendered and at the disposal of the captor He might be put to death, or he might be kept as a slave, and sold or bought as such. In either case no fault was found, they did as they expected to be done by. In going to war they were prepared to take the natural consequences, which were very serious, as the results of war must be under all circumstances. There is no more to be said about the natural results of war than about war itself. The necessity of it, or the possibility, is inherent in the depravity of the human race. What was allowed the Jews in this connection was not slavery in its essential character, but the right of war according to international rules and customs. It was necessary that they should be on equal footing with surrounding nations in this respect, for sentiment on the part of one nation can't oppose force on the part of another.

What were called bondmen among the Jews were such as were sold for debt, or such as sold their time and labor voluntarily. When debt is incurred, justice demands it should be paid, and all that was at the disposal of the debtor, all that had money value was put under requisition toward paying the debt. Property was first taken possession of, if this did not suffice to square up the account, then the money value of the person of the debtor was considered, together with those of his wife and children, looked upon as one with himself. So far, the principle aimed at was nothing but justice, pure and simple. However it was not untempered with mercy, for the law provided that persons thus taken possession

of could only be held to the Sabbath year, which might be the next, or it might at most be six years hence; and then it was distinctly provided that they should not be sent away empty.

At the present time persons are not indeed taken possession of in payment of debt, but their time and labor may as truly be laid under contribution. How many slave all their life to pay a debt and hardly get the food and clothing the bondman was allowed; they do it nowadays without any hope of a Sabbath year to cancel the claim upon them. Not only had the person of the debtor to be set at liberty within a reasonable time, but his homestead, if it had been sold for debt, must be restored to him or his family at the year of Jubilee. It was moreover provided that usury or interest must not be taken for money lent to help a man in his necessity. Besides this, the Mosaic law contains numerous exhortations and provisions in favor of the poor, the stranger, the fatherless and the widow. Under the law of Moses, monopoly in land or money, or the centralization of wealth in the hands of a few was impossible. There will be a need of studying the law of Moses, to solve certain social problems among us, which threaten society with disruption.

The war of extermination against the Canaanite has been objected to as cruel and selfish. Apart from its cause and the object in view, it may surely be so regarded, but so may any act of justice seen in the same narrow light. It is a proverb that nature is cruel, and there are necessities involved in the existence of an evil and law-breaking race, that will always appear cruel. That children should share the fate of their parents only partake of what is thus involved. The object was not

simply punishment but improvement. There is no reason to suppose they were better than the common stock, or would have become better. We see them even among us with all the characteristics of anger, envy, hate and cruelty, strongly developed and actively exhibited. One might as easy make out that it is cruel to allow a wicked and depraved race to continue to exist, as it would be to blot them out of existence altogether.

Leaving alone for the present God's share in that transaction we may remark that the war was in keeping with the times and in harmony with the law of nations. The Israelites did as they expected to be done by in turn if they should become the weaker party, and as they actually were done by, for they were in their turn dispossessed or exterminated more effectually than the Canaanites. And it is tolera' ly certain that the Canaanites had got possession in the same way, that is by killing or driving away those that were there before them. As far as justice is concerned there is little to be said in general, and probably nobody thought of finding fault on that score, though of course each in turn was sorry to be the weaker party.

But it is understood that this was not a mere human transaction. Moses and the Israelites had a divine commission to go and destroy the Canaanites because they had become too wicked to be tolerated. Probably the Almighty has a right to pronounce sentence of death as much as a human court of justice, and surely he must be as able to judge of the desert. The crimes of the Canaanites are explained as far as language will tolerate their description, and the Israelites were warned that unless they did better, they would fare no better. The exhortations, warnings and instructions to the Israelites

and this occasion as we have it in the books of Moses can only be accounted for on the presumption that God was the moving and controlling cause, how different from the vain-glorious, proud, presumptuous exhibition of national vanity common in such cases, even down to our day. God explained to them that he meant no favoritism and their subsequent history proved it. Some may find fault with the Almighty for this work and for giving the Israelites the commission of performing it, but he has taken upon himself the responsibility, as it is repeatedly avowed in the Scriptures, and will no doubt answer for it. And according to the Bible this is by no means the only war God will answer for in the same sense, not as the primary cause, for that is the wickedness of men, but as the overruling cause. To his judgment is ascribed not only war, but pestilence, famine and other evils; and indeed, so it is very generally looked upon, even nowadays. Take the words of the immortal Lincoln, "If God will that it continue until all the wealth piled by the bondsmen's two hundred and fifty years of unrequited toil shall be sunk, and until every drop of blood drawn with the lash shall be paid by another drawn with the sword, as was said three thousand years ago, so still it must be said, that the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether."

A word should be said about the imprecatory Psalms in dealing with the subject of this chapter, but it will be needful to say but little after what has been said in the foregoing. These Psalms are not in harmony with some of the sentiment of this age, but they are in harmony with the sentiment of the Bible throughout, for God is everywhere set before us "a God of judgment." The inspired utterance of these Psalms are not to be taken as

the expression of personal and selfish hate and vindictiveness. It is the indignation of God's spirit, and the curses of God against the enemies of righteousness. They are to be compared with the woes of Christ against the unrighteous, and his curses upon the wicked at the day of judgment.

That curses and maledictions against the wicked and their wickedness should be inconsistent with truth and righteousness, can only be maintained on the ground that there are really no such things as wickedness or wicked persons. The supposition in this case would be, that what is called by these hard names is really nothing but abberations of mind and heart that a little patience and forbearance will cure. But the Bible does not take so favorable a view of the case; it considers the wickedness of men very willful and deeply rooted, and the wicked powerful enough in their wickedness to resist even divine love and goodness and in spite of all that can be done, go on making devils of themselves, and worthy of nothing but curses.

But it is suggested that the curses should be directed against wickedness rather than against the wicked because Christ, it is said, loves sinners although he hates their sins. But the distinction here is carried too far, there is no sin apart from the sinner. Sin is only sin because it is the voluntary acts of responsible beings. What we hate is the wicked will that is behind the acts. The same acts by irresponsible persons, or by animals, would arouse in us no moral indignation. Therefore as far as we hate sin we blame the sinner. The God both of the Old and New Testament loves sinners, and calls upon them "Turn ye, turn ye, why will ye die." But when the possibilities of good, the hope of repentance is

gone, there is no longer any love for the sinner. Christ does not pretend to love sinners in the last day, when he shall say to them, "Depart from me ye cursed."

As a summary of the morality of the Israelites as set before us in the Old Testament, it is clearly seen that they held as firmly as we, all the principles of righteousness and morality, and that the application of these principles in many instances was imperfect. The perfect application of these principles would result in a perfect life and character. It need not be said that the application is still imperfect. Do we find fault with the Almighty for bearing with the weaknesses and imperfections of the past, we might as well find the same fault now. There is no other alternative; either God must bear with a fallen race, or else exterminate them. As free moral agents, their volitions cannot be forced, nor improvement imposed on them with a high hand. If it were otherwise, we should not hear so much in the Bible about the patience and long-suffering of an omnipotent ruler.

CHAPTER III.

RELATION OF THE OLD TESTAMENT TO THE NEW.

"Had ye believed Moses ye would have believed me, but if ye believe not his writings how shall ye believe my words?"—Christ.

The purpose of the New Testament is not to teach a new religion that was not taught in the Old, neither is it an amendment to the religion of the Old Testament but rather the complement of it. The object is above all to establish the fact, that the incarnate Son of God, the promised Messias, the Revealer of the Father had actually appeared in the world and that the redemption promised by God from the beginning had been accomplished. The main purpose in the life of Christ was to establish his claim as the Messias; to this end he wrought miracles "if he had not done the works which no one else had done—they—the Jews—would not have sinned in rejecting him." He warns the people from the very beginning of his ministry that "He had not come to destroy the law or the prophets—no—not a jot or tittle." If such thoughts had entered their minds because he taught as one having authority, he tells them that they are mistaken. He used his authority to expound the law, not to controvert it. To accomplish the will of the Father as "the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world, this was his supreme office, that the Son of God should indeed, while on earth, occupy his time in

expounding the law and the prophets is what we might expect, and there was need of it. The state of the Jewish church was very much like that of the Christian before the Reformation. The scribes had made vain the commandments of God because of their tradition, as the popes and priests had at the time of Luther. There was as much need of a reformer. But as Luther did not invent the doctrine of justification by faith, or as Wesley in his time did not plan the doctrines of regeneration and sanctification, but established them according to the teaching of the Bible, and renewed their claims upon the consciences of men; so Christ in his days did not originate the commandments of love to God and man, for they are both contained in the Old Testament Scriptures; Christ showed their importance as a summary of all our duties towards God and men.

The relation of the Old Testament to the New is not the contrast of law founded on justice, set over against a gospel founded on mercy. The Old Testament is not the revelation of a God of righteousness particularly, and the New that of a God of love especially. Love and righteousness, justice and mercy are equally prominent in their due proportion both in the Old and New Testaments. The New Testament is a continuation of the unfolding of God's law and character as begun in the Old, a systematic unfolding along all the lines of law and character. Yet it is a favorite idea that the Old Testament reveals God in a different light from the New. Do we ask if God changed between the time of Moses and Christ, the answer would not be an open denial of the passage that God is "without variableness or shadow of turning," "to-day, yesterday and forever the same." Yet popular notions in conformity with popular teaching

represent the idea, that if God has not actually changed since the time of the Old Testament, he has yet wonderfully improved in the way of leniency and forbearance. But denying the possibility of any improvement in the Eternally Perfect it is yet left to account for the popular notion. It is accounted for by the fact that the sterner side of the New Testament is generally ignored, and the other side exclusively insisted upon. There is in the New Testament increased light on God's character in all its attributes, not only those of love and mercy but those of justice and holiness as well. The life and death of Christ does not illustrate the love of God more fully than it does his justice. God gave his only begotten Son because he loved the world well enough to do it, but he required so great a sacrifice to atone for the sin that had outraged justice, that he might establish a true basis for pardon and justification. The death of Christ is everywhere represented as the strict fulfillment of the Old Testament type in "sacrifices to atone for sin;" it does not therefore bring in any new principle of love and forgiveness, but is the enforcement of the Old which had ruled from the beginning.

God represents himself as a father in the Old Testament as well as in the New. "Art not thou our father?" "As a father pitied his children." The popular idea about the "fatherhood of God and brotherhood of men" is not strictly Scriptural. God represents himself as having a father's heart and feeling toward all, but only those are said to be his children who are "born again" by his spirit. And only those that are thus born constitute in the true sense a brotherhood, although they may have a brother's feeling toward others, and try to win them. Christ repudiates the right of those that are

not his followers to call God their father. He says "the father ye are of is the devil." Otherwise they are called the children of this world. They must first be born into God's family before they are his children.

As for the revelation of God's loving kindness and tenderness, there are as noble passages in the Old as in the New Testament. The twenty-third Psalm may be placed beside the tenth chapter of John, and comparisons equally favorable may be found throughout both parts. As for judgment and cursing, the scene of the last judgment as pictured by Christ, together with many passages by Christ or John, surpasses in terrible impressiveness anything in the Old Testament. If God's language to man is harsh in any age or toward any people, it is because there is peculiar occasion. We cannot use tenderness, and pronounce blessings, unless circumstances justify it, unless there is occasion for it. "Behold, therefore, the goodness and severity of God" equally in the Old Testament and the New.

The conditions of salvation were the same in the Old Testament time as now. As God is the same and our relation to him the same, so it is impossible that there should be any distinction. God has no preferences and can be no respecter of persons. If God shows a preference like that of the selection of Israel to be his peculiar people, it is because the whole world is best served by such arrangement, even as the promise to Abraham was that "in his seed should all the nations of the earth be blessed." St. Paul tells us that the old world was saved by faith as much as the new, it was a faith that showed itself by "works" and no other faith saves now. The need of an atonement for sin was taught in the Old Testament; sacrifices were part of the

system, and were only abolished as their types and prophesies were fulfilled in Christ.

As God and our relation to him is the same in all ages, so the operation of his spirit is the same. It is no more the dispensation of the Spirit now than before Christ. The mercy and grace of God have always been dispensed whenever there have been hearts open to receive. It may appear in the words of Christ, that while he walked on earth the spirit was concentered upon him, and that this implied a limitation for the time being; but the reference is plainly to conditions, and the limitation, as always, that imposed by sin and unbelief. The spirit of God was "striving" with the early antedeluvians. Throughout the Old Testament we find the operation of God's spirit suggested in various ways, both in the conversion of men, and in the bestowal of gifts, even the very highest, as the gift of prophecy and that of infallible inspiration in recording the revelation of God's will. And the results produced were as grand and significant in respect to character and spiritual life as nowadays. We can find no better words in which to express our spiritual experience than those of David and other Old Testament saints. And they realized their utter dependence upon the spirit of God in the work of converting and sanctifying: "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from thy presence and take not thy Holy Spirit from me. Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation and uphold me with thy free spirit." Christ promised a special outpouring of God's spirit on the day of Pentecost; there have been special outpourings both before that time and since, and even now we pray for a fresh outpouring of God's spirit. Nor was the Old Tes-

tament church lacking in that aggressive zeal which characterized the Christian church. Provision was made in their system for proselytes of other nations. The Jewish missionary work among the Gentiles in the centuries preceding Christ, was as successful as any similar work has been. The Jews had their synagogues in the towns and cities of every nation, and had made multitudes of converts. Here was the ground for the rapid spread of Christianity. Christian missionary work generally started from the synagogue, and was very successful among the Gentile proselytes. So it may be said in more than one sense, that the Jews paved the way for the progress of Christianity.

Some of the superficial teaching of this and former times have produced the impression on the minds of many, that the Old Testament religion was "formalism." It was perverted to formalism, but not more so than Christianity in this and other ages. The Jews like the Christians were very apt to retain the form and ignore the spirit of their religion. When Christ came, he taught them that the law and commandments must be applied to the thoughts and intents of the heart, as well as to outward performance. In some respects he taught that the law of civil duties prescribed by Moses should not suffice for his disciples. As, for instance, civil authorities might use an oath for confirmation if additional guarantee of truthfulness was thereby secured, but among his followers it should be taken for granted, that the standard of truthfulness was so high that swearing to the truthfulness of one's words should be out of question. In the Sermon on the Mount the future separation of church and state is taken for granted, and we have to bear in mind that it was spoken expressly "to his disci-

ples." The church and state was not now to be identical as hitherto in the Jewish nation. Henceforth, the church need to have to do with none but such as voluntarily take upon themselves the obligation. Therefore, the standard could be heightened and the requirements strengthened. ".Ye have heard it hath been said, an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth, but I say unto you,"—he does not say that this is not good as a principle of even justice, punishment in proportion to the guilt, he does not find fault with it properly applied, but he teaches his disciples, his church, that they must go farther than the mere doing of justice. They must "love mercy and walk humbly with their God." They must try to win the erring, reconcile an enemy and raise the fallen. The Old Testament is not indeed lacking in exhortations to this effect, even to the extent of doing good to an enemy, but this side of religion was apparently little cultivated at the time of Christ. A full and equable development of character is rare now as then. Christ emphasized every side of the religious life and strengthened the requirements. In applying law and judgment to the thoughts and intents of the heart, and in pronouncing punishment upon sins of omission, he strengthened the principle of justice as much as that of love. All that was implied in the law was applied by Christ, not as a new discovery, for the prophets had done so before, but with a new emphasis. He brought a stronger light to bear upon every subject, but the subject, itself, was not new. "The new commandment" was yet "the old which they had from the beginning." How justice may be blended with mercy, and love, patience and forbearance be made to promote righteousness rather than the contrary, is not a matter of cast-iron

rules, but of careful consideration and application of thought to each particular case. God demands a sanctified and alert intelligence as well as correct conduct.

The difference between the law of duty or commandments and the law of love as pointed out by Christ, is further explained by St. Paul in his Epistles. Here again it is often supposed that a contradiction is meant when only an explanation is intended. St. Paul uses such expressions as "being free from the law," "not under the law," etc.; this, it is believed, implies antagonism between the law and the gospel. Paul foresees that this misunderstanding may arise, for he corrects it by saying; "Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid; yea, we establish the law." This he does by teaching how the principle of law must become part of our own heart and soul, so that we shall no longer need to be reminded by the written commandment. When the spirit of the law is our spirit then we shall not need the letter. If the kingdom of God is within us, as taught by Christ, then we shall not need the rule of outward restraint. We know that this must come to pass before heaven can be realized. A heaven that would stand in need of the ten commandments and the Sermon on the Mount could not be much of a heaven. Law is a reflection on those for whom it is written, for it presupposes a disposition to transgress. This disposition must be subdued, so that we are not only free from the condemnation of the law, this indeed is implied, but free from the restraint of the law because in perfect accord with it. This is what St. Paul urges us on to, for the accord is not at once perfect, even in true Christians, except as to the will. Imperfections in our moral nature and our judgment will involve us in temptations,

and make necessary the law with its instructions, exhortations and warnings. But the principle of sympathy and natural accord must be in the heart of every Christian, and it must be a growing principle. The child who has need of having the rod always suspended over him, cannot be much in sympathy with the father; and the Christian who constantly needs the "shall" or "shall not" of the law, is not much of a Christian, there should be the spirit of sympathy that cried "Abba Father" and delights in his law. We should come into that perfect sympathy with the law-giver that we have one will with him, when this is the case then there is no more need of him making his will law for us. We could not imagine a case where one should feel called upon to proclaim a law to another if they are both in perfect accord. When we are in perfect harmony with God, then God has no law for us, we are a law unto ourselves. This is that perfect liberty of Christ, which knows no restraint, because it knows no disposition to transgress. To be free from the law is not therefore to have a license through the Gospel to disobey it, but to have enough of the Spirit of God to obey it without compulsion. Such were the Old Testament saints who could say: "How love I thy law, it is my meditation all the day. How sweet are thy words to my taste, yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth. I will delight myself in thy statutes. I have rejoiced in the way of thy testimonies." This is the true spirit of the child, than which there is nothing higher. In the truest and best sense, these Old Testament saints were free from the law as much as those of to-day. They were under the law of ordinances and sacrifices pointing to Christ, references to this as a law should not be confounded with the moral or general law,

the expression of God's perfect will, which none should wish to be free from in any other sense than that of being in perfect accord with it.

CHAPTER IV.

CHRIST AND THE BIBLE.

"In vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. For laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men. * * * And he said unto them, full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition. * * * Making the word of God of none effect through your tradition."—Christ.

Christ was the orthodox teacher of his days. The Pharisees had departed from the plain text of the Scriptures, while professing to believe them, they made them void through their theories of lawless interpretation. They did not really love the Scriptures, for these did not favor their personal or national pride and vanity; they rather loved the Talmud and apocryphal writings. What a Jewish Bible would have been without inspiration may be gathered from this Talmud, held in so high veneration among the Jews. On the side of Scripture we find simplicity, grandeur and humility, on the other hand we find extravagance, foolishness and pride, all to a degree of absurdity.

Christ rebuked them with bitter irony, saying, full well ye reject the commandments of God that ye may keep your tradition. Throughout his ministry Christ treated the Scriptures precisely as an orthodox teacher of Christianity would nowadays. From the beginning he warns them that he has not come to destroy the law

and the prophets, that he who teaches contrary even to the least of the commandments shall suffer loss. To the Scriptures he refers every question and settles every difficulty. Does someone ask him what to do to be saved, the answer is "What is written—how readest thou?" He does not profess to have any new or easier way of salvation. Repentance and reformation, with faith in sacrifices and an atonement for sin was the old way, and he came to emphasize and perfect this plan. Some, nowadays, profess great love and reverence for Christ, while treating the Old Testament Scriptures with great irreverence, he utterly rejects their hypocritical advances, and tells them "If ye believe not the writings of Moses, how shall ye believe my words?" Is a difficult theological question propounded, as, for instance, "Whose son is Christ," to the Scriptures alone and their authority he refers it, never to the church or reason or any human authority. If a Scripture statement seem difficult of acceptance, as, for instance, the quotation, "I have said ye are gods." He does not allow it to be slurred over or ruled out, he reminds them that it is Scripture and as such it cannot be broken. When he is questioned by the Sadducees in regard to the soul's immortality, he tells them that the cause of their error is that "they know not the Scriptures, nor the power of God." He then proceeds to establish the doctrine of the soul's immortality by the Old Testament Scriptures; it is not generally supposed that much is said there on this subject, and he might in this case, if ever have had occasion to fall back on church authority, philosophy or his own personal knowledge, but he evidently considered a passage from Scripture of more weight than all else, for by Scripture he confounds the Sadducees and rebukes

their unbelief. When the rich man in hell desired that a special communication or revelation in regard to the future state should be sent to his five brethren, he is told that they have Moses and the prophets "let them hear them." The soul in torment ventures the assertion that some supernatural manifestation from the spirit world would be more convincing, but the answer is definite, that "if they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rise from the dead." Moses and the prophets, he asserts, are of more authority than spiritualistic mediums and supernatural manifestations.

Liberals would have found in Christ an excellent subject for the charge of "Bibleolotry" had he lived in our days. Scripture was his only weapon both of defense and attack. Did the devil tempt him with evil suggestions, with this he repels the tempter. The devil was aware of Christ's regard for the Scriptures as the Word of God and the final authority in all matters of dispute. He takes advantage of this knowledge and quotes Scripture to prove the innocent nature of his insinuations. Christ lets him know he is right regarding the authority of the Scriptures, he himself knows nothing higher, and by another "it is written" he confounds the sophistry of the wicked one. If Christ had been willing to allow that the law of Moses contains errors, he had occasion to say so, for Jews and disciples alike suggested the idea, and pressed the question upon him; as, for instance, when they reminded him that Moses permitted divorces for other causes than adultery. Christ does not allow that it was an error of Moses, he tells them there was a reason for it, although from the beginning it was not so, neither should it be so any longer among his disciples.

Christ allowed that the Scriptures could be misconstrued and misunderstood, but never that they could be broken. After his resurrection, the Scriptures are still the revelation from God by which he enlightens his disciples. Beginning with Moses he goes through the books showing how it behooved Christ to suffer and rise from the dead.

The ingenious ways in which our liberalists get round the authority of the Bible by fanciful distinctions between the spirit and the letter, the human element and the divine, etc., is entirely foreign to Christ. He insists emphatically upon the letter, even down to the jot and tittle, and he insists equally upon an unselfish and unprejudiced interpretation of the letter, that will not explain away the spirit and intent of the book. This is precisely what the liberalists are doing, but it can only be done to the extent they wish to do it, by repudiating the language or plain text of the Bible. For after all, the spirit, the intent or meaning of a book can only be known by the letter or language used, aside from it there is no spirit, intent or meaning. Their only purpose in destroying faith in the letter or text of the Bible, is to get rid of its meaning or the spirit of it.

That Christ's regard for the Scriptures was not a matter of accommodation to his age is fully evinced by the nature of his quotations and their frequency as well as by his character, which was incapable of any duplicity and never failed to rebuke sin or error where he found it. But it is more fully demonstrated by the fact, that his regard for the Scriptures was above that of his age, above that of the most conservative believers of his times. It was an intense conviction of his own, that found expression in fierce

denunciations against those who, while they nominally admitted the authority of the Scriptures, yet found means to set it aside when it conflicted with their theories and speculations, their pride and love of vain-glory. It was perhaps the only instance in which Christ gave expression to the bitter irony of a soul that is wounded at its deepest, when he rebuked the Pharisees for their duplicity and fraud in dealing with the Scriptures, saying, "full well ye reject the commandment of God that ye may keep your tradition, making the Word of God of none effect." The same holy zeal for the Word of God and everything that is enjoined in it found expression in his cleansing of the temple. "It is written my house shall be called a house of prayer but ye have made it a den of thieves." And the disciples remembered that it is written, "the zeal of thine house hath consumed me." Again after his resurrection we find this indignation breaking forth against his disciples, because of their doubt and hesitancy in accepting and believing all the Scriptures. "O fools and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken." It is sufficient to say of the apostles who succeeded Christ in his divine work, that their regard for the Scriptures and their authority was precisely the same as that of Christ. "But what saith the Scriptures" is the final appeal of St. Paul in questions of controversy. It was to them, the God-breathed Word of God and "the sword of the Spirit."

The testimony of Christ to the authority of the Old Testament Scriptures has a bearing upon those of the New Testament which is not to be overlooked. We cannot accept some of the teaching of Christ and reject other, without repudiating his claims as the Messiah sent from God, the only begotten of the Father. We cannot

accept the teaching of Christ as the Truth of God without accepting all that is involved in it. In the general claim of Christ and his teaching, it is involved that the record of it must have been kept free from the contamination of error. The general claim of Christ and his teaching is that a divine overruling providence was connected with his appearance in this world, his mission, his words and work; but it could not have been thus connected without being extended to the preservation of his teaching and doctrine free from error. This teaching and work was meant for all generations and for all ages; it must therefore have been kept in its purity for those generations and ages, if omnipotent power and wisdom was indeed connected with it from the beginning. We cannot, therefore, accept Christ in the sense he claims acceptance, without accepting the aforesaid which is involved in it.

Christ, explicitly and definitely, gave his testimony to the record of God's revelation in the Old Testament, and affirmed often and emphatically that it was intimately and indissolubly connected with his own revelation, so much so that both were but a connected whole. He found no fault with the books admitted to the Old Testament canon, nor with the contents of any of them, he accepted them fully and wholly without excepting, "one jot or tittle." What one would expect that an overruling Providence would be concerned with the preservation of an all-important revelation from God to man he fully meets and endorses. The testimony of Christ to the Scriptures of the Old Testament as a true record of God's revelation through the fathers and prophets, must be extended to the New Testament Scriptures, they are according to Christ, and the claims of all, a connected

whole, and the providence of God must have been equally concerned with the preservation of both, free from errors that would impair their value.

If we reject this, we must reject the claims and teaching of Christ in general, and take our stand on the ground occupied by Unitarians, on this ground there is room for accommodations of all sorts. But on the ground occupied by believers in Christ's divinity, we are shut up to faith in almighty power and wisdom connected with what Christ did and said, as well as the correct and infallible record of what he did and said. The first would have had no value without the latter, and the latter could not have failed, consistent with divine power and wisdom.

The Christian, therefore, who accepts Christ as he is set before us in the New Testament must assume that the record of his works and teaching has been preserved to us free from error. What would overthrow this assumption, would overthrow faith in the Christ of the New Testament. — Idealized conceptions and counterfeits would survive, but with these we are not concerned. The question then is whether there is sufficient evidence to overthrow this assumption of the believer. Here is where the work of the critics come in, have they, or can they prove that the record is faulty and unreliable and the assumption of the Christian false.—Our aim is not to "prove Christianity" but to show in some respects what it is, and what is implied in an honest acceptance of it. As to the critics and their criticism, upon the whole it may be said that the general tone and expression is that of professionals, out of harmony with the spirit of the Bible, playing their trade and making the most of it.

The authority of the Bible is based on its infallibility

as a record of God's revelation to man. The question is not what amount of praise may be bestowed upon Christ and the Bible; what are their excellencies, even their glories, all these are trivialities and mere evasions of the question. Christianity purports to be something more than a mere part of the general revelation through nature and the conscience. It claims to be a special revelation from God of the creation of man, and his fall from a state of purity; a plan of God for his redemption, including the incarnation, life and death of the Son of God sent into the world; a continuance of the same by the operation of the spirit of God through the church and the Word of God; also the final destiny of man and a perfect law for his guidance. It will not do to reduce this to a mere system of ethics or to anything else than what it is, and put it forward as the "religion of Christ." This is not a plea for Christianity but simply for honesty.

The Bible is the only record of this perfect revelation from God, and it is involved, as indeed it is claimed, both by Christ and the Bible itself, that the record is as perfect as the revelation. Any process in dealing with the Scriptures that allow of selections and rejections of parts or portions, subjects them to the authority of man, and is a denial of their claims and the testimony of Christ in their behalf. It is not a question of how much selected or rejected, the rejection of a "jot or tittle," or teaching contrary even to "the least of the commandments" violates the authority of the Scriptures just as much as though the rejection comprised large portions. Neither do the motives or professed faith alter the case; the chief champion of infidelity in this country was answered in his attack on the Bible by certain of the liberal school; he rejected their interference contemptu-

ously by stating, that "there was no quarrel between them." He was perfectly right, he accepts and rejects as suits him, and they do the same; they have no more right to find fault with his selections and rejections than he has to find fault with theirs.

The question is not whether some Christ may be left us, even if the worst the critics claim for their criticism be admitted. Christ would always be somebody, a historical person truly. Those of Unitarian tendencies will rest content with this "historic Christ." They will argue like this; do we not indeed know that Christ as a person, sometimes walked this earth, and if we have no reliable information as to what he was or what he taught, may not this enlightened age make out what he ought to have been, and what he ought to have taught; and in making it out for ourselves, may we not the more surely get a Christ and a gospel that will suit us. This will do for human philosophy, but it is not the Christianity of Christ and the Bible.

Others, who are in a state of unrest, do not take it so lightly. They hope they will not have essentially to alter their position, but they do not know. They are watching the critics and are prepared for an emergency. They have assumed the attitude of retreat and are waiting for the signal to fall back. They hope there will at least be left them some truth to fall back upon. Of this there can be no doubt, even if they have to occupy the ground of the unbeliever wholly. But what would be left would not be Christianity. Even the attitude they have assumed, it need not be said, is entirely foreign to Christianity and the Bible. In it is assumed a faith with assurance, that brings peace and rest; that works wonders and wins victories.

The selective process in dealing with the Bible, by which in some way or other it is subjected to the thoughts and sentiments of men, finds many forms of expression, but it all amounts to the same thing. Some have set up the test of what is vital compared with what is circumstantial. Of course, according to this test, whatever agrees with one is very vital, but what does not agree is quite circumstantial and wholly unimportant. Already in some quarters, the principal doctrines of Christianity, including the divinity of Christ have been disposed of as none vital. The Decalogue has been encroached upon and some of the commandments are evidently not regarded as very vital. Perhaps it will be agreed upon as vital that it is—sin to steal. But we would not believe that a supernatural revelation, recorded in the Bible, beginning with the creation and ending with the final catastrophe, including the incarnation of the Son of God and the tragedy of Calvary, was necessary to teach us this, which after all has never been seriously doubted. Christ does not allow of the distinction; he tells us that even a jot or tittle is vital, and must stand till heaven and earth have passed away.

Nor will it answer any better to tell us that the selective process is not meant to exclude any part of the Bible, only we must be content with the "life, love and righteousness" of the book and insist lightly upon the letter. This is the idealized Bible. It is but another way of the same process by which the commandments of God are made void because of the theories and traditions of men. In this light the Bible will be looked upon as a series of ghost stories; the stories they would tell us, amount to little, but the impression they make is everything. But when we come down to the facts we find

that they themselves cannot keep hold of this disembodied ghost of a Bible. For after all the Bible is a record of plain facts and definite doctrine, and when we have sifted their theories, sentiments and opinions we find plain opposition to facts recorded and doctrines taught in the Bible. This comes out even more distinctly among lay-members of those that have become affected with this tendency, they are less sophistical and will tell us openly of their non-acceptance of books, portions, or doctrines of the Bible. The impression, the leaders, with their sophistical, indefinite, roundabout talk make upon the minds of laymen is, that the Bible may be subjected to personal like or dislike, and this is what it amounts to.

The selective method of dealing with the Bible is destructive of a well balanced system of morality. Men are sure to reject what is disagreeable to them, which they stand most in need of, and ought to give the more heed to. Every age has its own hobby, it would be sure to reject what was contrary to its hobby, and succeeding ages would know that it had rejected what it stood particularly in need of. The religious and sociological theories that are characteristic of this and of every age, hold the same relation to the Bible as a part or parts do to the whole, they are all one-sided, insisting on some particular phase of thought or sentiment. Our present is very marked as a hobby-riding age, it needs the whole Bible, which, like a center of gravitation keeps the erratic movement of human thoughts and feelings within due bounds.

The tendencies of our times have made a broad road from orthodoxy to agnosticism, and every section of the road is well represented. Unitarianism can hardly be called a half-way station, it is too nebulous in its charac-

ter to suggest anything stationary. Those who cut loose from implicit faith in the authority of the Bible, may, at first, think they will know where to stop, but they find the ground shifting and uncertain as problem after problem arises, demanding to be met in the same critical spirit. The battle soon begins to rage about the supernatural, miraculous and spiritual elements of the Bible. This is practically the whole of it. It cannot be believed in intelligently and held firmly unless there is something in the human soul that responds to it, unless the soul, itself, has been stirred by the forces and influences of the supernatural. This something of faith, love and reverence, is apt to grow weak and feeble as the critical spirit asserts itself. No wonder, therefore, that the battle is easily decided in favor of further concessions. But there is, practically speaking, nothing further to concede, the spirit of antagonism to the Bible and faith in it, becomes one of bitterness and rancor, infidel flings and sneers are freely resorted to. They exemplify in their own experience the evolution which is their hobby, they call it the evolution of religion but the proper name for it is the evolution of skepticism.

The effect of this progressive spirit is well exemplified in the history of Protestant Germany. Christianity here was placed side by side with the sciences by the authorities who control the theological institutions through the state church. It has been looked upon equally with the sciences as a subject for original investigations and discoveries, a premium was put on "advanced thought," innovations, and novelties of any sort. This has stimulated to unceasing efforts to put forth original views, and invent theories that would gain the inventor credit for new discoveries. Christianity as a rev-

elation from God has been practically lost sight of. To the critical professors of theology, Christianity is nothing, their speculation about it, is everything. The effect has been, that where faith is still retained, it is not that of the schools, but the orthodox faith of the Bible. The rationalistic leaders can scarcely be said to have a following, for those that become effected by their skepticism act consistently, and drop church and religion altogether. To the professors and critics there is the excitement of controversy and the glamour of notoriety, but the poor fellows who gain nothing of this sort, who are asked to take the skeleton naked and bare, to them it has no attraction. How far the disintegration has extended may be gathered from the fact, that although the German Lutheran immigrants to this country, and their descendants cannot be less than several millions, yet German Lutheran church members in this country number only so many hundred thousand. The German Rationalists, have not thought it worth the while to build churches to perpetuate their faith in this country. They have simply joined the great, irreligious mass which constitute one-half of our population.

What has Rationalism done for this country. Every week and month we have set before us in papers and periodicals, by writers of rationalistic tendencies, what great things could and would and should be done, but what is actually accomplished is of a purely negative character. What about the old institution called the Unitarian church, has not the liberal faith had an opportunity to show what it can do in this country. Let us examine for a minute the faith of Unitarianism just to see how the evolution of skepticism is evolving. Anyone who knows what Unitarianism was at its start will mark the

difference. We have before us a pamphlet, issued by a Unitarian Publishing House, it tells us about their faith. It will of course not fit everyone in their church, for nothing definite is required of any one. But having the endorsement of the general body, it will undoubtedly answer for a general statement. We find according to this exposition, that Unitarians believe in a God, he is called, "the soul of the universe." This is a convenient expression for what may be anything or nothing. But it is quite needless to speculate as to the nature of this God, for we are told immediately by the author, that he is nothing to us nor we to him, we sustain no relation to him whatever. Our actions have no reference to him; we do not sin against him, and he does not reward or punish us. We sin against ourselves and our neighbors, and take the consequences. There is no divine providence, but only natural law. Prayer may be permitted as an accommodation to the weak, if they think it does them any good. The author expresses a preference for the Old Testament rather than the New; we mention this for the benefit of those who think the Old Testament must first be left behind in the evolution of skepticism, otherwise, the less mention of Christ or the Bible in connection with their faith, the better. There is neither heaven nor hell, if there is a future world,—and the "if" is a big one—it is a mere continuance of the present kind of life. The idea of a future world is entertained as a hypothesis rather than a fact that ought seriously to effect us. As a future world or life fade and grow exceedingly dim, the present takes on great dimensions. There will be evolution everywhere and in everything. The book closes with an apocalyptic vision of a terrestrial heaven, from which unfortunately we are debarred, for

it is a matter of evolution and time. When it does come there will be happiness enough to "go round," and people will have two hundred years in which to enjoy it.

If breadth and liberality is what we want for success, Unitarianism ought to have succeeded. Nearly half of our population is in a condition that would make them eligible for membership, they have sufficient faith and respectability to join, and the door we presume is open for them, but they do not care even to take the trouble of stepping in, not to any great extent. There are two conditions demanded of a church or religion for success among the masses of rich or poor; one is an all-important salvation to be secured, and an easy way of securing it. Ritualistic churches throughout the world fulfill both of these conditions, and the mass of mankind belong to them, The Unitarians fulfill the last of the conditions, the way of salvation is easy enough, but unfortunately, they make it doubtful whether there is anything either to be saved or lost, and mankind at large will not get up an enthusiasm where nothing particularly is involved. To Unitarians, religion is something to speculate about, rather than a thing of certainty and much concern. These speculations may lend a little color and interest to their social gatherings, whether they go by the name of worship or otherwise, but the mass of mankind is not much concerned about speculations. The activity of Unitarians does a great deal to break down faith among the masses, but they are not the gainers by it. But few members are added to their church by persuasion, their principal gains are from orthodox churches, and is brought about by the evolution of skepticism. Now and then a Congregational minister will "come over" and bring his entire congregation along with him. It is

the natural landing place for those that are drifting.

It is said that our age has got beyond the old theology and requires something new, or something else. But it is a mistake to suppose that this is a characteristic of our age alone. Every age since sin entered the world has asked for something else. God's plan of salvation as revealed in the Bible has never suited the carnal mind. In the days of the apostles, the theology of the Bible was "foolishness to the Greeks, and to the Jews a stumbling-block." The Greeks sought wisdom and imagined themselves "wise above what was written." If we were to wait till the world, the carnal mind in any age, comes into sympathy with the theology of the Bible, then this might indeed as well be laid aside, for that time has never been and will never come. But Christ does not ask us to inquire what suits the age or the world, and make our theology and preaching to harmonize with it; he has determined for us what is truth and theology, and asks the world to accept it or take the consequences. Those who do accept it, "to them it is the power of God unto salvation" as much as ever; to those who do not, it is foolishness and a stumbling-block as in the days of St. Paul.

It is one thing to accommodate ourselves to human nature, or the sentiments of an age, and gain adherents by so doing, it is another thing to produce spiritual life and spiritual results. This was never done except by the Word of God and the Spirit of God. Along through the ages down to ours, we find the great religious revivals and moral reformations associated with unquestioned faith in the Scriptures, and reliance upon the power of God's spirit. Through the long night of the middle ages wherever we find gleams of light, it is associated with

the Bible, hid away carefully from the priests, read and listened to in secret. Thus the Lollards in England, the Hussites in Bohemia, the Valdenses in Italy, and others here and there where the Bible in some way had found access. Like King Josiah of old, when he heard the words of the new found book, rent his clothes, and pronounced woe upon himself and the people, because they had not kept the words of the law, so Martin Luther when he found the Bible in Erfurt convent, never doubting for a moment that it was the divine, infallible word, saw at once the apostacy of Christendom, and set about remodeling it after the pattern of the Bible. Tyndall smuggling copies of the new printed Bible into England. Knox rousing Scotland with the suppressed truth. Calvin in France and Zwingly in Switzerland, a host of heroes and martyrs, finding inspiration and strength through their implicit faith in the Scriptures, fighting battles against odds that we can now scarcely realize. And it has been the same since then, the great revivals and reformations with their Wesleys, Edwards and Finneys have only been produced by men who believed the Word of God without doubt or question.

Whenever faith in the Scriptures as the infallible Word of God is shaken, there is an end to the manifestation of spiritual power and life. The form may remain for a while as it often does, but the consciousness of loss of power is present, and churches and ministers cease to depend on it. Human device takes its place, ritualistic or spectacular. Social advantages, entertainments and so forth, are held out as inducements, and some are added to the church by these means. Spiritual life and the need of conversion is passed over lightly, people are appealed to on lower ground, lower feelings

and motives are allowed to suffice, till at last like the Unitarians, they "do not even know that there is a Holy Ghost" and ridicule his power in revivals and conversions. Generally, this spiritual declension is accompanied with increased noise and demonstration about the "needs of humanity." As failure to produce a "new creature" by spiritual regeneration becomes an accepted condition, the mending of "the old man" is attended to with clamorous show of zeal.

Great problems are before this nation and dangers threaten—shall we be able to meet them with the wooden sword of human speculations held by the trembling hand of doubt? Evangelical churches who have lost faith in that "two-edged sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God," and do not have the Spirit to wield it, are at a disadvantage every way. If they turn to ritualistic practices and would fain be satisfied with the "devotional spirit" that consists in superstitious homage of priest and rites, and perhaps look with envious eyes at the priest and would like to be partaker in this homage, so easily secured and so gratifying to human vanity, in their feeble approaches they are easily outdone by regular ritualistic churches. If they turn to worldly devices, and depend on accommodating the depraved tastes of the worldling, they are equally sure to be beaten by the world, the flesh, and the devil. If they turn Unitarian or infidel, and make their door as wide and the way as broad as the road to destruction, the masses will but despise them and their accommodations of which they have already enough. "Do ye not, therefore, err because ye know not the Scriptures nor the power of God." These two belong together "the sword of the Spirit" and "the power of God" wherewith to wield it. It is said that men will not

nowadays yield to authority, but it is a mistake, they never yield to anything else. Even the painted authority of priest or pope is yielded to readily. The Evangelicals can only hope to win as they are able to convince men that they have authority behind them. It is always asked "in whose name or by whose power do you this." Only as they can manifest the authority will men pay attention to them or their message. When the authority indeed is manifest there is no need of accommodations to the flesh. Men have before this taken up the cross, forsaken all, and followed, because they believed they had heard a message with authority behind it. With the emphasis of Christ "ye do therefore, greatly err" in discrediting "the Scriptures and the power of God" your only authority.

CHAPTER V.

INTERPRETATION AND THE NEW DEPARTURE.

"What is written in the law; how readest thou?".....'' O fools and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken.''—Christ.

The Bible is written in popular language, to be interpreted by common sense. The meaning must be found in the language used, it is not to be supplied by our own conceit. The language used is not that of a human law book, written on the supposition that the reader may be dishonest, and will to the best of his ability try to pervert the meaning to suit selfish ends. This being the case with a law book, the greatest care and skill is used in wording the text, so as to give the dishonest reader, the ingenious lawyer, and the prejudiced judge or juror no occasion for his designs. The Bible is written on the presumption that the reader is honest and in reading simply desires to find out the actual meaning of the book, instead of casting about for loopholes to escape the meaning. If a human law book that is worded with all the skill and precision modern scholarship can command, may yet be perverted and misinterpreted to serve selfish ends, we may not wonder that the Bible, which is not thus guarded in its expressions can be perverted, misinterpreted and made to serve selfish ends, when in the hands of those that are prejudiced, dishonest, and filled with their own conceit. As

the incarnate Word when he dwelt among men, was not careful about giving offence to those who were only too glad to find offence, so with the written Word, no care is taken to prevent occasion for those who seek occasion.

How impossible it is to disarm prejudice and enforce honesty is seen in the easy perversion of even the most carefully worded law book in the hand of the most intelligent interpreter. The constitution of the United States is supposed to be a product of the highest order of scholarship; and those whose business it is to interpret it, are presumed to be in an eminent sense, men of learning and integrity, yet in scarcely a single case do they agree about the interpretation of this law. No one will suppose this is because the law is incapable of a fair understanding, or that it is on account of intellectual incapacity on the part of the judges. We all know that the reason is to be sought for in deep rooted prejudices, natural sympathies and some secret, lurking self-interest, operating, perhaps, without any consciousness of it. In interpreting the Bible the same causes of misinterpretation operate. Sometimes this is so evident that there is scarcely even a pretence of concealing it. Who, for instance, does not at once perceive in the Catholic interpretation of the Scriptures that lust of power and greed of gain has made their interpretations to serve these interests. Or who does not perceive in the interpretation of the Bible by Universalists and Liberals, how natural sympathies are entirely consulted, how else come they to give more weight to their forced interpretation of a doubtful passage than to the plain statements of twenty passages.

It is doubtless true as some assert, that we can prove anything or everything by the Bible, but we had

better not. Although we are free, yet we are responsible for the use of our freedom. Nothing is easier than to impose on ourselves, and do it till we scarcely know when we cheat or deceive ourselves.

How little the writers of the Bible cared to shield themselves from adverse criticism by those who were not friends, may be seen in many instances. "Answer a fool according to his folly, lest he be wise in his own conceit" says one proverb, and in the next we read: "Answer not a fool according to his folly, lest thou also be like unto him." A plain contradiction, unless one will consider that time and circumstances may have something to do with the way in which it is best to answer a fool. "Bear ye one another's burdens" says St. Paul, and almost immediately after, "for everyone shall bear his own burdens." St. Paul could not have forgotten what he had already said for the two passages are so near together that they may be compassed in a glance. Yet he does not stop to explain the seeming contradiction. Evidently, in writing, he is alone considering the honest unprejudiced reader to whom it will readily occur that in spite of the general principle of helpfulness, there are burdens which it is either just we should bear ourselves, or impossible to be relieved from by the help of others. This is but in harmony with the general principle of Bible writers, who never for the sake of guarding against prejudice and dishonesty, go out of their way to make explanations which we can make for ourselves if we wish things explained. Apparent contradictions may be only different views of the same question as illustrated in another instance: two different accounts of King Asa in Kings and Chronicles agree in ascribing to him the same good character and beneficent reign, and moreover

that he carried out a reformation to a considerable extent. One writer, however, remarks that the high places were not taken away, the other includes them among other matters of reform. This has been magnified into a very great difficulty, what is it but two general accounts, not pretending to tell all about it. One sees that something was done in the way of removing these places, the other that something was left undone. Where two witnesses of good character agree in their general statements, justice demands that any possible discrepancy should be explained on rational ground, rather than magnified into an insurmountable difficulty.

Some subjects and some doctrines are many-sided, and any one-sided view of such a doctrine may seem a contradiction to another view of the same doctrine equally partial. As for instance, salvation by faith or by works, set against each other, instead of complementing each other. The atonement, an exhibition of God's love wholly, or God's justice only, instead of both equally. Vicarious suffering indeed, the just for the unjust; but not a final reckoning on the score of justice. A term, or a statement on some subject made or used in a general sense, compared with the same term or a like statement used in a special or obsolete sense, can be made to look like a serious discrepancy. Different views of the same question pronounced with reference to different circumstances may in the same way be made to appear like a contradiction. On discrepancies and contradictions of this sort have been constructed destructive theories with reference to dates and authorship of different books, and various adverse criticism.

While no care is taken in the Bible to guard against dishonesty, care is taken to guard against false impres-

sions on the part of the honest reader. In a human law book, the perversion or misunderstanding of a single word in a text might alter the whole intent of the law, this could scarcely be in the case of the Bible. All the principal doctrines are taught not only in one but many texts and books, by plain statements illustrated by parables and history, and enforced by exhortations and warnings. There is in this a provision against the fatal consequences of accidental errors in the text. If such are found, they must be proved in every alleged case, and not taken for granted whenever there is something that puzzles the understanding, or fails to agree with preconceived notions. This is only another way of repudiating the authority of the Bible, and exalting our fancies above it. A textual error cannot, properly speaking, be said to be a part of a book, and does not inveigh against its character. Nor is any modification of our conception, or profession of faith in the infallibility of the Bible called for on account of any possible inaccuracy in the text. Whatever is involved in this is perfectly understood, and no extra provision is needed for that purpose. There is no difficulty involved but what may be overcome by the use of the same common sense that is required in all the ordinary affairs of life. Critics and cavilers can find no case unless they persistingly ignore this, and refuse to have anything explained or understood. Their aim is to magnify difficulties, to break down the doctrine of inspiration and authority, or to give it that shape of uncertainty and indefiniteness which leave room for their speculations and play for their fancies and which relieve them of any obligation as to faith and morals. That the difficulty with them is found in the doctrines of the Bible rather than in the text is

evident, for never so soon have they disproved the infallibility of the Bible to their own satisfaction, before they proceed against the principal doctrines of the faith and very soon involve the foundations of Christianity in their attack.

It is needed that attention should be called to the difference between religion as a universal fact, and Christianity as a special revelation. We have no knowledge of Christianity outside of the Bible, but we may have religious knowledge without the Bible, as there has never been a nation or age without religious ideas and worship. Religious knowledge may be acquired by the intuitive faculties, conscience, whatever we see of design in creation; our observations and experience will instill in us religious ideas and notions. Reason may group together these various facts, perceive their relations, interpret their meaning, and deduce religious and moral systems, as pagans have never failed to do. Reason, in all this, is not the source of information or knowledge, can originate nothing, but can only judge of what is discovered to us. What may be understood of religion without the Bible, is all comprehended in the Bible; it is the amplification, the certainty and the full explanation of what nature teaches. The intimations of nature are verified for us in the Bible, by direct revelation as a message from God. Moreover, the Bible contains a record of religious facts of momentous importance which nature could not discover to us. The Bible, therefore, is the final authority to Christians; when God speaks from the Bible, reason hears and understands and cannot go beyond it. Imagination may go beyond it, or outside of it, there is no limit to that faculty. The one who imagines may consider his imaginations reasonable, but this does not alter

the fact that they are fancies. Such should not be grafted on the Bible or Christianity, as additional facts, progressive truths, etc. The Bible and imagination, even when dignified by the name of reason, cannot stand alongside each other as authorities.

If the Bible is the word of God it is according to the highest reason, and such reason will judge it reasonable. Man's reason is not of the highest order, is not infallible; as a faculty in man it is hampered and imposed upon by passion, prejudice, pride, prevailing sentiments and customs, natural sympathies, self-interests in various forms; and other infirmities and imperfections that flesh is heir to. We may, therefore, not look upon reason as a perfect guide in understanding religious truth, even when revealed to us, much less as a revealer of truth. In order to understand and appreciate truth as revealed to us, it is needed that we besides reason, should have a spirit in sympathy with truth, as Christ said, "the spirit of truth," which is the spirit of Christ. The more man is able to rise above his natural infirmities, as mentioned of all kinds, the nearer he is allied to God in wisdom and virtue, the more reliable is his reason and the better will he be able to judge of the reasonableness of anything. Those who have been nearest to God in all ages, have always found the least difficulty about the Bible.

When one professes Christianity, the presumption is that he has found it reasonable; when he disputes its reasonableness, he goes back and his profession; if he proceeds to exalt his reason as an authority to which revelation must be subjected, he declares himself an unbeliever; to persist in staying in the church after this would make him a dishonest intruder.

The relation of the church to religious truth is the

same as that of the individual member. There is no moral, intellectual or supernatural element inherent in the church that is not possessed by the individual Christian. If we multiply one by a thousand ciphers, the result is but one; if we multiply finite wisdom with ever so many units, the result is but finite wisdom, and this is all that the church can bring to bear upon any question. The church has only the same sources of information in regard to religious truth as has the individual, and can not make or manufacture truth any more than the individual. Her decisions can make nothing true that is not already true. She is not, therefore, any more than reason to be set up as original authority alongside with the Scriptures. She is authority as to her faith and convictions.

When it is asked by individual Christians, to what extent the Spirit of God may be a source of religious knowledge aside from the Bible; we observe that the very object of the Scriptures is to give a clear and definite expression of the mind of the Spirit. But Christianity is not merely a communication by the Spirit addressed to our feelings and emotions and comprehended by an internal experience; it is the record and communication of facts connected with the whole scheme of redemption, addressed to our understanding and moral sense, and comprehended by our reason. These facts are not revealed to Christians by way of impulses and intuitions but by the written record we have of them in the Bible, and nowhere else. A Christian may hope for communion with God through the Spirit, to the end that he may be enlightened so as to understand the facts, and realize the power of the truth in his own soul. Impulses and impressions from evil influences may come even to Christians, all such must be tested by the perfect ex-

pression of the mind of the Spirit in the Bible. Otherwise we should continually be imposed upon by the speculations of Freethinkers and the hallucinations of dreamers. Nor does it make our infidelity and faithlessness to the Word of God any better because we are able "to pray over it." Nothing is easier than to form our selfish wishes and desires into a prayer and supposed suggestion of the Spirit and answer them ourselves in the affirmative. This is only making our prayer an excuse for our self-will. "Believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God." The spirit that sneers at the Bible and tries to undermine faith in its authority we may know is not the Spirit of Christ, for his indignation was hot against those that did the same in his days. The revelation of God's will and plan of salvation in the Bible is complete, and when personal, special revelation is claimed, it is invariably because the one in the Bible does not suit the carnal nature and the inspiration is from this source. We are promised the aid of the holy Spirit in understanding the Scriptures. "Then opened he their understanding that they might understand the Scriptures." "We have also a more sure word of prophecy whereunto ye do well that ye take heed."

It is strange to think of a being living in the enlightened age of the first century, later than Plato or Cicero, Alexander or Cæser, a being that has revolutionized the world, and is worshiped by hundreds of millions, as the one perfect in wisdom, love and power, and yet of whom absolutely nothing is known except what we find within the covers of the New Testament. Why was this? It was an age of learning, everyone

either desiring to tell or to hear some new thing. Why should not mention of him have been found plentifully scattered throughout the literature of the times? Why should not pagan, Jew and disciple have vied with each other in setting forth his life and reporting his doctrine? Why was it reserved for four of his own disciples to do alone this work as though they were indeed "chosen witnesses."

We have in our age many attempts to get away from the written record of Christ's life and character, while yet keeping hold of Christ and a kind of Christianity. We have vague and indefinite references to Christ as the one sufficient fact—aside from the record or slightly connected with it. "Holding up Christ alone as our creed," an ideal Christ that delivers us from the very definite and clear testimony of the true Christ in regard to the Scriptures. Christ, a "unique" being, not well accounted for. The term "unique" may do very well as a step in an argument, showing the character of Christ, but it has apparently come to be the stopping-place of many who profess to be Christians. But it was not till Thomas could say "My Lord and my God," that Christ acknowledged him a believer and he pronounced his blessing upon those that should thus believe. Again, we have "the historic Christ" a seemingly innocent and perhaps sometimes well-meant phrase, and yet generally involving an effort to meet skepticism half way. St. Paul spoke in his days of those who preached "another Christ." There is many "another Christ" preached in our days. In the ordinary sense of the word there is no "historic Christ." There is only the Christ of the Bible. No doubt the Gospels may be called history, and very good history too, but they are distinct and apart from the

world's history, and can not be classed with it. Josephus wrote a comprehensive history of the Jewish people, covering the period of Christ's life, but Christ, his life, work and character is no part of it. Some have deplored this, and even tried to make up for the defect, but the circumstance has a significance of its own. Mere allusions to the fact of Christ and Christians by secular writers of the first one or two centuries after Christ, may be counted upon the fingers of one hand. This in spite of the fact that Christianity had already become a power in the Roman Empire, and Christians numerous. Why this exclusiveness? It can only be explained on the presumption that a divine Providence overruled everything connected with his advent, life and death, and that there was a purpose and importance involved in this, which made it necessary in the divine plan, that the record should be kept pure and authentic; this could not have been, if his life and teaching had become part of the history and literature of the age; there would have been much spurious, indefinite and doubtful mixed with the true, so much so that every particular person might have formed his own particular opinion about Christ and his teaching, and perhaps have had reasonable ground. The spirit of this age is anxious for a Christ and a gospel, different from what we have in the New Testament. With what avidity would they have seized upon information outside of the Bible. But, alas, for their effort, there is not a scrap of information outside of it. Anxious as they are, they would not dare to lay hold on anything outside the Bible as authentic and trustworthy. Take away the written record of the evangelists, and you have an empty space, a formless void in the world's history, it is only as the spirit of God moved upon the minds of

the sacred writers, that a veritable Christ and Gospel was preserved for after ages.

The church is no authority, it has not preserved a single fact about Christ. The only tradition of the church that is of any value is that of the authenticity of the New Testament Scriptures; it corroborates what other evidence we have to that effect. Outside the New Testament, the church cannot tell us of a single thing that Jesus did, nor a single word of what he taught, or what he organized. It is wholly dependent on the Bible for what it knows and what it believes. Early the church began to "give heed to seducing spirits" and "fables;" inventions of popes and priests; it quickly changed and lost its original form and purpose, so much so that at the time of the reformation, no one who knew what the church was in the apostolic age, could have discovered in the church as it then was, the successor of it. Let it be remembered that this transformation had taken place although the Scriptures had not been lost, but only put aside, ignored and misconstrued. The church was only restored to something like its original form and purpose, by referring to the Scriptures. Luther and the rest of the reformers consulted nothing else in their work of reformation. If there had been no written record of Christ and his teaching, is it likely that the church by this time would have been sure of a single thing about it, if indeed it had preserved its name and organization, which is doubtful?

What then is to be said of attempts to introduce a Christ and Christianity that makes light of the written record—only this, that as a matter of consistency, they must apply the selective process to Christ as well as to the Scriptures which he so fully endorsed, the Christ of

the Bible, and the Bible itself cannot be separated. Having then established the selective process in dealing with the Scriptures, they proceed to deal with Christ in the same way, leaving out such attributes as offend them, and ascribing to him such as please them. In proportion as the authority of the Bible as a divine revelation grows weak, so the character of Christ, as God manifested in the flesh, grows uncertain. Affirmations first lose their positive quality, and then dwindle into ill-defined and vague terms, reducing Christ to a more or less mysterious person. His "divinity" may well be allowed, the dishonesty that professes a form of faith and rules out the substance counts for nothing with modern liberals. It will be reserved as understood that in a sense everything is divine, that we may all be called sons of God, and that the whole nature is an incarnation. Christ becomes to them really but an ideality projected by their own mind. That they can truthfully boast of following this their own creation of a Christ is not wonderful, having created him after their own image in their own likeness, they will as a matter of inclination worship him, and follow his teaching; in doing so they follow only their own mind and their own theories, for they do not allow him to teach anything else. According to this selective method of making a Bible and creating a Christ, each may worship his own image, and follow the teaching of his own heart. To the worldly, vicious and wicked, Christ becomes simply a convenience for getting to heaven without repentance and holiness, the one only anxious to pardon their iniquity and enable them to sin with impunity. To the sentimentalist, Christ becomes merely the sentimental lover of mankind. Respectable, society people will make of Christ an acceptable pattern,

a highly moral and respectable being, with a halo of religious mystery to heighten the interest; and upon the whole, when it is asked, who or what is Christ and his teaching, the only information we have on the question will be lightly consulted; the sentiment of the age, the morbid mind of the bookworm, the disordered nerves of "society" will give the answer.

We are in a land of liberty; no one is compelled to believe in Christianity, or to profess faith in its religion, who in heart is adverse to its doctrines. Anyone is permitted to believe he can improve on the Christianity of Christ, by alterations, additions or exceptions. But as a matter of common honesty he has no right to call this product of his own mind by the name of Christianity, or in any way to stamp it with the authority of its founder. If we believe in Christianity, we must believe that Christ understood it and was competent to teach it.

Christ, when he was on earth, was never anxious to attach to him those who were constitutionally opposed to his doctrines. When the gaping, curious multitude thronged about him as would-be followers, although they had no heart for his teaching, instead of conciliating them, he flung them back with even harsher demands. The learned and wise fared no better, "Unless ye eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink his blood ye have no life in you." "This is a hard saying, who can hear him?" "Dost thou know, Master, that the Pharisees were offended at thy words?" "Let them alone, they are blind leaders of the blind." The repelling force of the Gospel is as great as the attracting. Christianity is not to be imposed on anyone, and the complaint is not about "freedom of thought" but lack of consistency. It is the dishonest attempt to lead the believer gently, as it

were, step by step, away from faith in the authority of the Bible. It is the subtile, insinuating attempt to undermine faith in Christianity under the guise of friendship and a profession, which is apparent in all their action, and even goes so far as to break out into rancorious accusations and profane sneers, if the church is not at once willing to abandon the Word of God and take up with their theories.

CHAPTER VI.

INTERPRETATION AND RITUALISM.

"Do ye not therefore err because ye know not the Scriptures neither the power of God?"—Christ.

The difference between the ritualistic and evangelical interpretation of Scripture does not consist in any marked disagreement about the letter of the Bible, but in the different interpretation of the spirit of the book. They may hold practically the same doctrines, but they differ widely in the application of them. The reason for this the Scripture itself ascribes to the carnal mind that does not comprehend the things of the Spirit of God. It tells us that in order to understand and appreciate the truths in their spiritual depths, there is needed a spirit in sympathy with the truth. The assumption is, that none but those who are spiritually minded are likely to realize the meaning of truths pertaining to our spiritual relation to God. This relation signifies something more than what is implied in morality and the expression of piety in religious ordinances. It has reference to communion with God and the work of God's Spirit in the human heart. In order to be impressed with this, a certain attitude towards God is required, either that of the prodigal returning to his father's house, or that of the accepted son at home with his father. At least a spiritual awakening, or the full development of a spiritual life. This is

taught in such passages as this; "The natural man received not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned," etc. Christ fully recognized the utter impossibility of impressing the grossly carnal-minded with spiritual facts and doctrines, such he found among the learned, the cultured, the priests, as well as among the ignorant multitude. He did not even care to attempt to explain to them the spiritual significance of his parables and metaphors, because in them was fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, "Hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive: for this people's heart is waxed gross," etc. Even his disciples were in the beginning so dull of apprehension that they often provoked his righteous indignation. On one occasion he said to them "beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees, and they reasoned among themselves, saying, it is because we have taken no bread. Which when Jesus perceived, he said unto them, O ye of little faith, how is it that ye do not understand that I spake it not to you concerning bread." In like manner Christ said, "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink his blood, ye have no life in you." "Except a man be born of water and the Spirit he cannot enter the kingdom of God." The Ritualist, in the grossness of his carnal apprehension, consecrates a wafer and believes he is in very fact eating the flesh of Christ; he consecrates a little water and believes it has changed him all over. "How is it that ye do not understand that I spake it not to you concerning bread when I said, Except, etc.; verily in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaiah as much as in those of old."

It is involved in the giving of a revelation from God

that it should be comprehended, but it is not involved that the comprehension should be by miraculous endowment; the supposition is rather that it must be by the faculties of judgment and reason given us for that purpose, coupled with that spirit of sympathy, without which no book or communication is well understood. These do not insure infallibility, whether exercised by a pope or anyone else; they insure a degree of correctness, corresponding to the degree of intelligence and spiritual insight on the part of the reader. When the pope claims for himself the gift of God's spirit to enable him to understand the Scriptures, he claims only what God has promised to all his children for the same purpose. If the pope makes his claim on the ground of character and spiritual sonship, his claim, if he is a child of God, is as good as any other child of God; if he claims it on the ground of office, it is a carnal apprehension of spiritual truth. The promise of the holy Spirit is "to all those that obey him" and "there is no respect of persons with God." Office, title and dress does not count with God, and will not enable one to work the miracle of infallibly comprehending the Bible. The difficulty is not in getting at its meaning as though it were a mystery; the difficulty on the part of priests and popes as well as laymen, is to produce a heart and mind open to the truth.

We believe that the holy Spirit given to all the children of God does make them less fallible and faulty according to the measure in which they receive it. But neither the promise of God nor any experience would justify us in claiming absolute infallibility; if this were the case, then all Christians would be infallible, for they all have the gift of God's Spirit, if they are indeed his children. But anyone who undertakes to interpret the

Scriptures, even if he be not a pope, does claim something akin to infallibility, he claims that he is right; if he is honest he cannot claim anything less for his interpretation. But in claiming he is right he does not ask anyone to take his word for it, he allows that his assertion of being right may be brought to the test; and the test in this case is the Word of God, as read and understood by others, who as men of intelligence and children of God, have an equal right to judge. The difference therefore in the claim of being infallible and the claim of being simply right, is, that the latter does not persevere in his claim, unless it can stand the test of the Word of God and the judgment of honest men; but a claim to infallibility demands that the interpretation shall be taken for granted to be right, and deny to others the right to test it, or examine it critically. If an interpretation be left open to criticism and future review, a wrong impression may be corrected, but if it is established by infallibility, it remains established whether right or wrong.

In the Catholic Church, the miraculous endowment claimed by the head of the church assumes that shape of mechanical appliance characteristic of ritualistic churches, which serve as a substitute for spiritual operations. He claims the endowment as a miraculous gift to work a miracle of infallibility, not merely as a power to enlighten his understanding and bring him into sympathy with truth; he claims it on the ground of office and in his capacity as official, rather than on the ground of spiritual sonship and holy aspirations. Catholics are bound to, and do believe, that a wicked pope would have this supernatural endowment equally with one who had some ground in character to claim a degree of the power. The work of interpretation is that of an office,

and the process a mechanical certainty. A perplexing question is brought to this office, run through the process and comes out infallibly settled. Questions not only in theology, but in science and politics, used to be settled in the same infallible way. Questions in astronomy and other sciences were brought to the pope, run through the process, and declared infallibly settled. But science became active, and proved that the process was a blunder, and the result anything but infallible. In the presence of certain facts, by which the result could be tested, the infallible process was not a success, and was therefore abandoned, except in theology, where demonstration is not obtainable.

It would be well for Christiendom if no other or worse error existed than those due to want of infallibility on the part of men in interpreting the Scriptures. It is sufficient that the laws of God are infallible, even as the laws of nature; with a sure basis for our reasoning, the exercise of this with the rest of our faculities will insure satisfactory results. It were better that the results should be in a slight measure faulty than that man should be reduced to an automaton, simply to be worked by God as a mechanical certainty. The greatest cause of error is want of apprehension of, or sympathy with truth. Eccentric or undisciplined minds have at times started errors that have found considerable acceptance. But the worst of all errors are due to mercenary motives. To fill the coffers of church and ecclesiastics, to establish them in power and keep the masses in subjection, interpretations have been put upon the Word of God that anyone may pronounce infallibly to be the work of "cunning craftiness."

Master minds of intelligence are doubtless needed

for the heavy work of systematizing truths and harmonizing doctrines, but otherwise, in the words of Christ, it is often "revealed to babes what is hidden from the wise and prudent." Ecclesiastics in high authority are apt to have their particular party and interests to defend, and this is apt to blind their vision, and prejudice their minds. The humble child of God, who comes to the Bible with no other desire than that of knowing his Father's will, has in this singleness of aim a great advantage in realizing and appreciating the truth. There is therefore no need of taking second-handed what one can find in its original purity in the Word of God. But the position of middlemen is profitable in religion as well as in trade and politics. Popes and priests have established themselves as such middlemen. They are like the smart politician, who is never weary of assuring his constituents that their interests are safe in his hands, and that all what they have to do is to put in their vote and pay their taxes; or they might be likened to the dishonest middleman in trade, who not only demands a large percentage of profit, but falsifies his wares and cheats his customers; thus popes and priests not only levy heavy tribute, but falsify the doctrines to suit their selfish purposes, and tell their dupes that it is reserved for them alone to understand the Word of God, that they may keep the knowledge of their knavery from the common people.

The difference between the evangelical and ritualistic interpretation of the Scriptures, is, as we have seen, not a mere disagreement about the meaning of passages, it is the difference between the carnal and the spiritual interpretation of Christianity as a whole. As apprehen-

sion of the spiritual element in religion grows weak and feeble, ceremonials are multiplied, and the stress laid upon them magnified; as was seen in the Jewish church up to the time of Christ; in the development of the Romish system, after the decadence of primitive Christianity, and as seen at present among Ritualists of the Anglican communion. The fact of the Holy Spirit and his work in the redemption of men, as plainly taught in the Scriptures, could not be denied. They symbolize this work in their ceremonials, which are so many attempts to account for and manifest what they have failed to realize by personal experience or spiritual apprehension.

The fundamental doctrine of the church is that of regeneration, the Holy Spirit taking possession of a human soul, infusing into it his own life, and transforming it into the likeness of God. By virtue of this "conversion" or "new birth" a person is admitted into fellowship with the church. So teach both the Ritualists and the Evangelicals. But here at the very foundation of Christianity we mark the difference between the carnal and spiritual interpretation. The Ritualists, finding it necessary to account for, and give expression to the spiritual doctrine of regeneration in some way, do so by making the symbol of regeneration equivalent to the fact of regeneration. This symbol is baptism. In the primitive church, when a person professed his faith in Christ, and it was ascertained that his faith had produced repentance and conversion, or regeneration, then he was taken into the church, having the rite of baptism administered to him as a token of the regeneration supposed to have taken place. In ritualistic churches, instead of baptism being administered as a token of a re-

generation already brought about by repentance and faith, it is administered to produce regeneration. Not that it is supposed that the sprinkling of water alone produces this change, but it is believed that when baptism is administered by the priest in due order—great stress is laid on this—then the Holy Spirit will be present and regenerate the infant or adult, as the case may be. According to their faith, a tremendous change has taken place in the baptized person; before baptism he was carnal and a child of the devil; now he is spiritual and a child of God. That no such change has ever been witnessed actually to take place by the mere administration of this rite, either in infants or adults, is not apparently their business. If it is not baptism, then they do not know what it is. According to their own way of putting it, to baptize a person is to make him a Christian, and he is made a Christian by being baptized. Their statement of the case reflects severely upon St. Paul, for he tells us in one of his Epistles, that he baptized but a few, consequently made but few Christians. It would even imply that the Apostle is a trifle blasphemous, for he actually thanks God that he has baptized but a few. Christ fares nothing better, for it is said of him expressly, that he did not baptize, he left that to his disciples as subordinate work.

Regeneration, as has been said, is the qualification for church membership, so admitted to be both by Ritualists and Evangelicals. When this regeneration is required as a fact, manifest by its fruit, then the church becomes what it was originally meant to be. When baptism, either of infants or adults, is made to stand for regeneration, it becomes equivalent to the whole population of every kind and character, as we see it in ritual-

istic State Churches, both Catholic and Protestant, where everybody are, by virtue of infant baptism, members of the church, profane, wicked, worldly of every grade. No wonder the Catholics have found it expedient to institute an order of Saints in the church, to represent its holiness, but according to Bible definition of the Church of Christ, all its members are Saints, or else they are intruders.

In keeping with their system, and the same law of carnal interpretation is their doctrine of apostolic succession. When the Jews, at the time of Christ, boasted of being in the succession by virtue of their descent from Abraham, John the Baptist told them that their boast was a small matter, God might from the very stones rise up children to Abraham. Christ likewise rebuked their carnal ideas and lack of spiritual apprehension, when they made the same boast before him. He tells them that they might be the children of the devil, for all that they were children of Abraham according to the flesh. He tells them that "the flesh"—the mere carnal, or outward, profits nothing, it is "the Spirit that giveth life." Still, the Jews persisted in pointing to their long genealogies, leading back to the fathers and patriarchs, claiming, by virtue of this succession, to be "the only true church," for which reason St. Paul in like manner rebukes them. He tells them that their succession by book and numbers is vain; that it is those that have the faith of Abraham and the Spirit of the Patriarchs, that are their true successors. This was quite incomprehensible to the ritualistic Jews; they must establish their relation to the fathers by some outward proof or token. So it is with Ritualists of to-day; they count back their succession to the apostles by an uninterrupted laying on

of hands, duly numbered and booked down. We tell them that their succession is according to "the flesh"—outward circumstance—and "the flesh profited nothing." It is those that have the faith and spirit of Christ and the apostles that are their true successors.

But speaking of being in the succession of Christ and the apostles in any sense of the word, it is well to bear in mind that Christ, and the apostles that were with him, in instituting and organizing the church, laying down rules and delivering doctrines, had an authority and an office, to which no one can succeed. The words they spoke, their teaching as preserved in the Scriptures, is their successor, and stands as their authority in the church for all ages. The whole body of believers, which is the church, acts under this authority, and is the active agent in making practical application of it in all departments of rule and Christian work. Gradually the church acquired and discharged this responsibility, even while the apostles lived, and were plainly meant to assume the whole of it after their death, in harmony with the great principle of equality, laid down by Christ, who said: "Call no man rabbi, father or master, for one is your teacher and master, even Christ, and all ye are brethren." It is needless to say that this principle does not rule in ritualistic churches. The clergy constitutes an oligarchy, apart from lay-members, as in the Catholic Church, where the pope elects the cardinals, and cardinals in their turn elect the pope, and together they elect all who have orders in the church. Lay-members have nothing to do but submit to them as teachers and masters, supreme and infallible.

When Christ was about to leave his disciples, he

promised to send them a "comforter" in his place—"the Spirit of truth" which the world could not receive, but only those that were in sympathy with him. It should be the invisible presence in place of the visible Savior. The Roman Catholics have materialized this invisible presence in the Eucharist. The wafer in the hands of the priest is transmuted into the literal body of Christ and given to the people, that they may in eating it have Christ in them. The doctrine is worked for all that it is worth, and everything involved in it is fully admitted, as for instance in the following quotation from a Catholic authority, which is but the echo of Catholic writers in general. "Every day multitudes of priests, be they fervent, lukewarm or vicious, it is the same, summon him (Christ) where it pleases them, give him to whom they will, confine him under lock and key, and dispose of him at their pleasure." The carnal interpretation with its gross materialism could go no farther than this. One may laugh at the absurdity or cry at the blasphemy and folly of it with equal reason. Argument would be out of place. The irony of the prophet Esaiah in denouncing idolatry would be appropriate, his language need hardly be changed to be applicable. "He burned part thereof in the fire, with part thereof he eated flesh, he roasted roast and is satisfied; and the residue thereof he maketh a god, he falleth down unto it and worshippeth it, and prayeth unto it, and saith deliver me for thou art my god. He feedeth on ashes, a deceived heart hath turned him aside, that he cannot deliver his soul, nor say, is there not a lie in my right hand." But it must be observed about this interpretation and doctrine, that in common with all the doctrines and interpretations of the Catholic Church it serves the purpose of the priestly

oligarchy wonderfully. What importance must be attached to the priest who thus has the Almighty at his disposal, can summon him at his will, deal him about to whom he will, and keep him under lock and key when not wanted. It has been in the hands of the priests a mighty engine for securing their own glorification, and the abject homage and submission of the masses.

In keeping with the same carnal interpretation of Christianity is ritualistic worship. St. Paul in the 14th chapter of his first letter to the Corinthians describes a meeting of a congregation of Christians, such as he approved of in the churches he organized. It is strictly speaking, a meeting of brethren upon the principle of equality laid down by Christ, where all might prophesy, and all take a part according to any gift or grace which they might possess, subject only to the general rule that all should be done decently and in order and serve the purpose of edification. It is needless to say that ritualistic churches have no meetings or worship of this character. In their churches the priest appears supreme, above and apart from the congregation; ceremonials and sacraments administered by the priest take the place of mutual edification. The word "sacrament" is not in the Bible, literally "holy act." Pronounced in a foreign tongue, it is invested with an air of supernatural importance, which serves well the purpose of the priest. This impression is enhanced as the priest appears up by the altar, arrayed in sacerdotal garments, handling the sacred vessels, performing the solemn rites, pronouncing the magic words, which are supposed to possess supernatural power. The congregation meanwhile as awe-struck spectators are passive recipients of the priestly ministration. This as we suggested may serve the purpose of

the priest, but it is not what St. Paul describes as Christian worship in a congregation of Christians.

In treating of this subject we have treated of a system not of individuals; if individuals are better than the system to which they belong, that is their honor and does not in the least excuse the system. But upon the whole, the ritualistic system finds a ready response in the human heart, which in its natural state is carnal, and more than willing to take up with a carnal interpretation of religion. It is not to be wondered at, therefore, that the mechanical process of salvation finds many adherents, it is a broad way and many there be that walk therein. To be told by an infallible pope or priest what to believe, suits them better than to search the Scriptures to find what the Lord requires. To be put through the process of regeneration by priestly baptism is easier than to seek to God for it by repentance and faith. Communion with God by the Holy Spirit as a personal experience is beyond his comprehension, but if it can be done by eating a wafer prepared by the priest, he is equal to it. The confirmation of the Christian life by a continual process of spiritual discipline, would seem a tedious affair, but if he can be confirmed once for all by a priestly rite, he is quite willing. To love God with all the heart, mind and strength, appears vague and perplexing, but he can understand this feast-day kept and that fast observed, so much of tithes for the priest; a cash consideration paid and have done with is far easier than a spiritual obligation. Faith in Christ that saves and transforms the character is difficult, but faith in an old blackened bone of a supposed St. Anne, a supposed mother of Mary, of whose life, death, burial and bones there is no record anywhere, faith in this with accompanying machine

miracles is as natural as anything. To be told by Christ to strive earnestly to enter the strait gate by personal effort and personal holiness appears most wearisome, but if he can buy sanctification of the priest during life, and be by him put through the strait gate at the last moment by holy oil and general absolution, he is content to go to heaven. Why should he weary himself with life-long preparations for what can be done at the last moment by the priest. It must be confessed, however, that even the Catholic Church has had some misgivings about the completeness of this mechanical product, for they have invented a purgatory to finish it.

CHAPTER VII.

CREED AND DISCIPLINE.

"Of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things to draw away disciples after them.—Hold fast the form of sound words."—Paul.

Why the creeds of Christendom are many while Christ and his Gospel are one, is a question often asked. While it is unfortunate that there should be any occasion for it, it is not in itself very perplexing in the light of general experience, for we know how difficult it is for men to arrive at precisely the same conclusion on any important question. Among Christians, worthy the name, there may be said to be practical unanimity in regard to the essential doctrines. Much schism has been caused by undue stress upon details; also by medling with speculative questions that are not necessarily part of the faith. Mercenary motives have had their share in creating errors and divisions; love of party, power and pleasures, have placed definitions upon the Word of God, that would make a heathen blush. The many creeds of Christendom are not therefore due to any inherent difficulty in understanding the Bible, but to cupidity and lack of spiritual insight, to man's general infirmities in part, and to his willful depravity largely.

The oneness of Christendom is no doubt a consummation devoutly to be wished for, but after all, it is but

a circumstance about Christianity, and not the thing itself. Our Savior prayed for the oneness of the church. He must have taken its existence for granted, before he could pray that it might be one. In praying for his disciples that they might be one, he acknowledged that they might be disciples in fact, even though they were not one in a visible union. He prayed for the visible union of his followers, the spiritual union could not be prayed for as a contingency; for disciples cannot be such in fact, unless they have the same Spirit of Christ, and are therefore spiritually one. What Christ prayed for was a circumstance that would greatly increase the efficiency and power of the church in the world—as we see of his words "that the world may know"—not therefore that the church and Christianity might have an existence, for that was taken as granted, but that the world might have additional proof, be the more impressed, easier convinced, and also that the church itself might be saved from trouble.

Christ, in praying, prayed for his disciples, those that were such in fact, by virtue of his spirit and faith. Without such there can be no true church. Those that are not such were not prayed for, and we conceive it is indifferent to Christ whether they are one or twenty. How many of the professed Christians of Christendom come within the scope of Christ's prayer, is not a question to be argued, but it is only those that have his spirit and keep his word. When those of which this can *not* be said boast of their unity by virtue of the same external circumstances and church machinery, they make that the essential, which is but a circumstance, though a very important one. Regeneration by God's Spirit is the basis of a Christian character, and

those that possess this character are the church. Visible union may be regarded as the top-stone rather than the basis. Those who make unity the basis, invert the pyramid, they begin with the top-stone and end with nothing.

The unification of the different sects of Christendom has of late been seen in the light of its importance, and been subject to much discussion. Plans for bringing about the desired result have been proposed. The need of a general conversion of nominal Christians before any consistent union could be brought about, has sometimes been pointed out, but more generally lost sight of. It is not, however, certain that even this would secure visible union. for natural infirmities might still prevent it. It is certain that it would greatly facilitate such union. A basis for union is suggested by the Catholic Church: the absolute rule of one person, to which the conscience and reason of all must bend. If unity is the one thing above all things to be desired, then this plan should receive serious consideration, for the success of it in the Catholic Church is manifest. We prefer disunion rather than union on this plan, for the same reason that we prefer a live body, although subject to disorders, to a spiritual corpse, however quiet and easily ruled.

Another basis is urged with great vehemence nowadays, it is that of "breadth." It is not quite clear where the real basis is, or where we are to look for the solid rock, for even the most liberal would hardly want to build on quicksand. Something solid must be presupposed, in spite of their own utterances, which would not warrant so charitable a view of their propositions. The terms "broad basis," "liberal views," coupled with

progress of some kind, is too indefinite to determine with nice accuracy what is meant. All that we are made sure of, is, that the basis must be very broad and liberal so as to include all, or as many as possible. That it would be possible to include all, or even many, could not, however, be hoped for, unless we could convince them equally with ourselves that a very broad and liberal basis is the thing. We might fling our doors wide open for all, but what if they would not come. We might assure them that they were welcome to stand with us on the common broad basis, that there is nothing in them that we object to. They might make this very thing their objection, our general indifference and indefiniteness.

This basis of "breadth" could not hang in the air, it would have to settle somewhere, probably it would find a natural resting-place in agnosticism. This, if it is also somewhat indefinite, is at least a fixed quantity in that it is a plain profession of doubt and suspense. The attitude of the agnostic is not without interest and a certain fascination; to be able to stand aside from the religious quarrels and disputes, and view them with the air of one who may be interested but not concerned, is an enviable position if it can be honestly maintained. If, moreover, he has the feeling that he is above this clamor and noise because he knows better, it must be to him a source of pride and gratification. He may with a good deal of satisfaction congratulate himself that he "is not in it." But then the question arises; what if he after all is in it in spite of himself. He acknowledges that there may be a God to whom he sustains responsible relation and that something or a great deal may be involved in this relation; only he does not know. Is his position

after all consistent or can it be harmonized with reason? Is it at all possible that there could be a God towards whom we sustain a responsible relation, with much involved, unless this God has revealed it to us with sufficient clearness to make us without excuse if we fail to recognize it? Suppose a ruler should make laws or decrees, and hold his subjects responsible for their observance but fail to promulgate his laws so they might be known. Or suppose a father to hold his children responsible for the doing of his will, but does not reveal his will to them with sufficient clearness for them to understand. In the revelation of God to men, we perceive a nice balance between what is sufficient and what would overpower the will. But if God has made no revelation to us of his will, then we may say freely that there is no God; or that we do not sustain any relation to him, which amounts to the same.

But if agnosticism is not meant by the demand for a broad basis, then it will probably be allowed that in spite of the utmost liberality there is yet something that must be insisted upon, that the basis if ever so broad must be sound. If this is the idea, then there must at least be a limit to the breadth of our basis, and our boasted liberality will have to end somewhere. The question then is the same as ever—where is the limit, what must we insist upon? Even our new departure would not allow that anything false or wrong should be allowed on the ground we stand upon; so we are back to precisely the old ground, for there are none but avow themselves liberal enough to include all the truth, and even our most liberal friends would not knowingly include anything more. But everything is not truth, as all will admit, here is the check upon our liberality. If our basis stretch

beyond the truth, it is too broad; if it is confined to less it is too narrow. We may, therefore, be in fault as well one way as the other. If we choose a basis because it is broad we use a hap-hazard method just as much as if we choose it because it is narrow. Reasonably we can choose as a basis of faith only what we believe to be truth, nothing more and nothing less, be it either broad or narrow, or be it impossible to apply either adjective to it. The only reason we can have to glory in our faith, or the basis of it, is the assurance that it is founded on truth.

We would not sacrifice Christianity for the sake of the Church and its unity. We would not have the way broad as the road to perdition for the sake of having everybody walk with us. This indefinite talk about breadth and liberality, is but the meaningless rattle of muddled heads and godless hearts. But it is evident, that a great deal of unity might be effected among Protestants, without sacrificing any principle of faith and practice. The differences between the principal evangelical sects do not concern themselves about essentials, and this is in a fair way of being understood. The precise way in which to administer the rite of baptism, is not now considered sufficient cause for quarrel; most evangelical sects are willing to have it administered in any way that suits the applicant. In the same way with the doctrine of predestination, peculiar to the Presbyterian creed, it is scarcely ever now made an object of dispute. It is kept in the background, for even those who hold it theoretically, know that it does not work well in practice, when appealing to free moral agents. It might be held as it is now, without interferring with fellowship and union. But even if the best could be

done in the way of union among professed Christians, three distinct divisions would be demanded by fundamental principles of faith. The Catholics would have to constitute one distinct body, and the Protestants would have to be divided between Ritualists and Evangelicals. There would be besides these, a distinct religious body, composed of Unitarians and those allied to them in faith, the Liberals of the new departure. These are practically one in belief, and would work together without any jar or disputes; reason demands that they should, and they might fill the want of a certain class of people. They could not consistently be included among Christians; their Christ and Christianity is of their own making.

Among the most sanguine of believers in the progressiveness of our age, it is not uncommon to predict a time near at hand when even Protestants and Catholics shall be united in one body. If such indeed could happen, it would be the most stupendous and far-reaching event of the age. Those who know what the distinction between the two bodies has meant in the past, what it means now, and may mean in the future, will fully admit this. But could this result be imagined brought about by any process, some revolutionary change would have to take place in the Catholic Church before it could be at all possible.

We might imagine the Catholic Church coming to herself like the prodigal, and asking seriously—"What after all is Christianity, what did Christ teach?" She might call a council for the purpose of deciding this question. It ought not in itself to be very difficult to decide, seeing all the information we have on the subject is found in the New Testament, and comprises only a

few hours reading. She would have to confine herself to this information. She would have to break with the past; this ought not to be hard, for it has been cruel and bloody beyond description. She would have to throw aside the rubbish of false interpretations, impositions and folly accumulated through ages; neither ought this be very hard, for some of the popes and their tools were among the worst of men, as Catholics will admit, and their definitions and doctrines foisted upon the church are moral monstrosities and intellectual absurdities. But then, on the other hand, there is human nature, with all that it implies. A going back to the New Testament would touch self-interests, power and pride. And we have to admit that there is no prospect of the result anticipated. The spirit of the middle ages rules in the ruling portion of the Catholic Church with as much malignity as it ever did. By the ruling portion we understand the ecclesiastic machine and the fanatical masses behind it. Of course, there are good Catholics in the true sense, liberal Catholics and infidel Catholics; these classes, made up of the more intelligent, support a liberal government in nearly all Catholic countries at present; how long they will be able to keep themselves in power is a question of great interest.

It is not therefore that the Protestant Church could not be induced to shake hands with the Catholic across the bloody chasm of millions martyred and millions slain. We could, if those hands were cleansed by repentance and reformation, but they are yet red with the blood of tens of thousands of murders, that have never been repented of, nor abhorred, nor regretted. Intolerance survived among the Protestants, as did other Catholic errors, for some time after the reformation, but the spirit

of the reformation is against it, it fell naturally, and is now repudiated and abhorred by all Protestant denominations. It has never been repudiated by the Catholic Church; they may well boast of unchangeable principles, and of them all there is none more unchangeable than that of conformity or extermination. For a thousand years she upheld this principle with fire and sword, and at an estimated cost of fifty millions of human lives. She clung to it with the tenacity of a thirty years war in Germany, and nearly a century of wars in Holland, and force alone prevented her from carrying it out to the total suppression of Protestantism.

But after all, this exhibition of the depravity of human nature, is only an example on a large scale of what we see illustrated every day around us. We know with what energy and tenacity even the smallest trust or monopoly will fight for their special privileges, their exclusive rights. The Catholic Church is a monopoly on a gigantic scale. She claims the special privilege, the sole right of saving the souls of men. This to her has been profitable business, and in her way of doing it, not hard work. In it is involved her claim upon the civil power to enforce her laws and impose her penalties, not relinquished, although not complied with to the same extent as in the middle ages. There is involved in it that claim to supremacy over all things, civil and religious, which the Catholic Church has never withdrawn. What the church is fighting for, and has fought for with a desperation that has trampled upon every claim of humanity, is not some particular religious creed, it is this monopoly with its immense interests of wordly power, wealth and homage. It is the fear of losing this, that fired her zeal and frenzied her heart at the mere sight of a Bible in the

hands of a layman, that made her stir all Christendom to wipe out in flame and blood even the least indication of rebellion against her authority. Does anyone doubt that she is still fighting for her monopoly, her special privilege and exclusive right. She is fighting for it with all the weapons of spiritual and carnal warfare, openly or in the dark, under the guise of friendship or undisguised as an enemy, and if anybody thinks she will quit doing it, he knows but little of human nature.

But what of the countless masses that uphold her power and submit to her control. It is not so much that they are ignorant, but they are interested in getting their souls saved as cheaply as possible. The Catholic Church offers them salvation on terms favorable to human nature; on easy terms, so to speak, for what after all is fixed tribute and rules, feasting, fasting, and ceremony, compared with intelligent, personal, heart and soul effort. The masses upon the whole consider that they have a good bargain of it. If anyone doubts, let him read history, or notice a Catholic mob, in some of our cities. If anyone should dare to tell these masses that their priests deceive them; that they are unable to fulfill their promises, or make good their bargains, we have the rage of the mob, the frenzy of St. Bartholomew and a thousand horrors. An all important salvation to be secured and an easy way of securing it, is a principle in religion and not to be trifled with.

Reforms in the Catholic Church can only be superficial improvements of local or temporary character, there can be no permanent or effectual reform. The roots of all evil are found in her organization and principles, and they will be apt to spring up and bear their legitimate fruit under any favorable circumstances, and

what that is, history fully informs us. Some would distinguish between the religious and political capacity of the church, and oppose her in one capacity while not in the other. The church itself knows no such distinction. The doctrines and interpretations of the Catholic Church have this peculiarity, that they are made and maintained with special reference to her political or worldly power. They are but the foundation stones on which rests the tremendous superstructure of worldly interests of all kinds. Does anyone imagine that the Catholic Church would strenuously insist on her interpretation of a certain passage connected with the apostle Peter, and coupled with the invention that he was the first pope at Rome, unless it precisely suited her purpose of worldly power and control. Where the selfish design is so manifest, to argue is folly. The doctrine of mass and purgatory, what is it, but a most ingenious scheme for levying tribute. How well does the doctrine of the "real presence" serve to secure homage and superstitious regard. The opportunities of the confessional as means of power and control is notorious. How much in her system serve indirectly the same purpose by appealing to the intellectual and spiritual sloth of perverted human nature. As with her doctrine so with her discipline, no one is ever expelled on any moral ground, but let them in any way question the authority on which rests her political or worldly power, they are at once pronounced worthless and got rid of. If the clergy of many Catholic countries are dissolute and greedy to a degree of audacity, and the people degraded, ignorant and foolish, it never causes a ripple of agitation or discontent on the banks of the Tiber, as long as they do not dispute the authority of the church.

Among Protestants, the Episcopalians have of late been forward with plans for union, and among them more especially the extreme ritualists. Some of their efforts and propositions are amusing because so apparently innocent. They do not seem to perceive that the difference between them and the Evangelicals, is anything more than a matter of ceremony, succession and the laying on of hands. But the difference between regeneration and church membership by priestly rite and ceremony, and the same by a spiritual change in character, realized by personal experience, and manifest by its fruit is fundamental and cannot be bridged over by mutual concessions. The Evangelicals must first forget what is fundamental in their faith, and what caused their separation from the state churches, before they can unite on a basis of ceremony and circumstance. Aside from this, we may readily admit that the difference practically is not so great as theoretically, for ritualists are not necessarily confined in their spiritual aspirations to what their system affords, while among Evangelicals competition coupled with an ambition for numbers and popularity, often betray them into laxity of discipline. But as to the respective systems, it is the difference between the carnal and spiritual interpretation of Christianity. The one is a creation of the civil power, whether in the hands of popes or kings; the other, in its inception, was the return to the Christianity of the Bible, by men who had a true understanding of it.

A creed or church discipline is not a substitute for, nor a supplement to the Word of God; it is a means of keeping the church pure and orderly. The church would have no need of creed or discipline if it were sure to have

to do with none but honest, intelligent and spiritual Christians. It is the law or rule of the church, but as St. Paul says, the law is not meant for the righteous but for the unrighteous. The church is sure to have to do with such as need law and rule to restrain and guide. There will be such as would "pervert the Gospel of Christ," those that "creep in unawares"—having not the faith," those that would make godliness an occasion of gain," and others who "having left their first love" began to give heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils—vainly puffed up by their fleshly mind"—unto whom the Word of God soon becomes distasteful, who will be tempted by a love of notoriety and popularity to make innovations in conformity to worldly taste. Such as have theories of their own they wish to circulate, and for this purpose would make use of the church. Unless the church has the means of getting rid of all such easy and effectually, it would in time disintegrate and become shapeless as well as helpless.

But it may be said; has not the church the Bible, which is the supreme rule of faith and practice, why not judge all offenders by this supreme standard. It has been pointed out elsewhere that the Bible is not written in the form of a law book, and was not meant to deal with those who are dishonest, conceited and unruly. Interpretations of the Bible may be made to serve selfish interests or spiritual blindness. For this reason the church must define her doctrine, forbid lawless interpretation, and have rules and discipline for bringing offenders to account.

A loose definition is of no value in dealing with offenders. Suppose we make "faith in Christ" the condition for church fellowship; the Christ might be any-

thing from the "good man" of the Unitarians to "the only begotten of the Father," the faith might be either dead or alive, it might be everything or nothing. Or suppose we make "love to God" the condition; the love might be a mere sympathetic impulse, or it might be a ruling principle. God might be the God of providence and the Bible, or he might be "the soul of the universe" toward whom we sustain no relation. It has become increasingly necessary to have strict definitions, and firm rules to enforce them, for modern heretics may and do freely subscribe to any creed or to any view of the Bible, knowing that they may depend upon their ingenuity to put an interpretation upon it that will enable them to hold the opposite of what is literally expressed. In such cases the church must insist upon her own interpretation and upon honesty on the part of those that subscribe to her creed. Unless the church had power and disposition to deal with this kind of cases, it would become a bundle of inconsistencies, a conglomeration of every kind of belief and unbelief.

We are being told by the leaders of the new departure, reassuringly, in the words of Thomas Jefferson, that "that error is dangerless if truth is left free to combat it." This may or may not be true, but at any rate, the church should not be battle ground for the combat. She is not an institution for the pugilistic encounter of truth and error, furnishing both with a free asylum, and the spectators with a free show. The church was meant to be an asylum for truth alone; she was meant to be "the pillar and ground of the truth," to uphold it and equip it for conquest. She is under no obligation to give error the same privilege, and no appeal on the ground of breadth and liberality should induce the church

to act as a disinterested mother and protector to both, anxious to give them an equal chance. Error belongs to what Christ calls "the world." The world will take care of its own, there is no fear but what it will be equipped and given a chance.

A state of conflicting opinions, doubt, suspense and speculation, is the proper and inevitable state of the irreligious world outside the church. It is so conceived of and described in the Word of God. But the church is supposed to consist of Christians, and Christians are supposed to have settled convictions as to faith and duty, even to a degree of assurance that can say as the apostle does, "we know." A faith and assurance, founded not merely on historical evidence, but on personal experience and realization of the power of the truth of which they profess to have become convinced. A church that is noncommittal as to faith and doctrine, that has no settled convictions, cannot, according to the New Testament, be called a church; they had better disband, take their place with the world, first settle their doubts and determine what they believe, and not make a profession of faith till they can answer in the affirmative that question an apostle once put to a candidate for baptism, "If thou believest with all thine heart thou mayest."

There seems to have been a settled plan in operation the last forty years to bring about the present apostasy. The process has been gradual and the development systematic. To sow the seed of error and make it grow, there must first be a breaking up of the doctrines and settled convictions of the church; this has been accomplished by an incessant uproar about dogma, theology and anything except the cloudy phantasm of doubt and suspense. After the leaven of this invidious clamor had

worked a while, and a sentiment had been created in the church that took pride in saying "we do not know," instead of the apostolic "we know," there was a bold attack upon the infallibility of the Bible and its essential doctrines. We were told, in effect, that while the fruits of Christianity was all that could be desired, the roots might very well be rooted up and the stem left to decay. What does it matter as we have the fruit. This view has been enthusiastically accepted by a portion of the churches.

The trend of modern Liberalism is the opposite of the assurance of faith spoken of in the Bible. To the Liberals, Christianity is something yet to be constructed by "modern scholarship," or evolved by evolution, rather than "the faith once delivered to the Saints," and permanently settled by Christ and his apostles. The withering scorn, with which Christ and St. Paul spoke of the wisdom of the scholarship in their days, may be understood when we notice the arrogancy and self-conceit of what go by that name nowadays. "Hid from the wise and prudent," says Christ, "and revealed unto babes"; "counting themselves wise they became fools," says St. Paul, and "the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God." Infidelity under the guise of "modern scholarship" is very much like infidelity under any other name.

Faith may exist in connection with some error, as goodness may exist in spite of some faults, but neither error nor faults can exist, even in the least degree, without harm or damage. Even as Christ taught, "Who therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach man so,—teach the least error, he may be saved in spite of it, but he shall be least." When

error becomes presumptuous and fundamental, and when faults develop into willful evil-doing, there is an end of excuses, and the duty of the church is plain. She must purge out the leaven of false doctrines and unrighteousness. Modern heretics never weary of stirring up strife and confusion about the doctrines of the Bible and the Bible itself. When called to order, they tell us piously, that we are neglecting our work for the sake of doctrine and controversy. They seemingly claim a monopoly of this, and it might be accorded them if they would take their proper place in exercising it. The time is long past, when the churches had a disposition to strain at a gnat, now they are more apt to swallow both gnat and camel. The prevailing zeal of the churches is not for strict doctrine, but for numbers and popularity. Heretics do not receive attention, unless they attack the fundamental doctrines of the faith, and not even then unless they are very pronounced and arrogant. Attacks on the authority and infallibility of the Bible involve all that we know or believe about Christianity; there is no source of information outside of it. If this can be proved to be unreliable, then it can be shown that we know nothing certain about what we profess, and we are back to the basis of paganism for faith and morals, namely, philosophy and human nature, or the compound of both which go by the name of reason. The Bible sinks to the level of ordinary books; we may go to it for help and inspiration, in our effort to find out what is faith and duty, as we would go to Plato or Seneca, Shakespeare or Tennyson, but it can offer us only suggestions. It is not the special revelation direct from God, to which human passions and prejudices, speculations and imaginations must submit as the final authority. We

have conceded all that infidelity ever contended for, for infidels are willing to accept the Bible as good, and some of its teaching as "beautiful," if they can be allowed the selective process in dealing with it, and subject it to their views and notions. They are willing to accept of Christ in the same sense, making of him what they will. There are in this case no infidels, nor any quarrel between the two parties. If Christians have been slow to perceive this, infidels have seen it clearly from the start, hence the incessant clamor and uproar in favor of the new theology. A shout of jubilee has gone up all along the lines of infidelity ever since the movement took definite form, and all seculardom has rejoiced with the joy described in the book of Revelations, when the two Witnesses that were very troublesome, were at last killed; so much as to cause one to believe Luther was right, when he made out the two Witnesses to be the New and Old Testament. But seculardom did not allow the dead bodies to be laid in their graves; oh, no, after they have been stripped of life and authority, they may well be allowed, for is there not much that is "beautiful" in them. But, after all, is there anything in or about religion that the world, the flesh and the devil hates and fears, except this same open Bible, not dead, but alive with authority.

The New Testament has a great deal to say about the duty of the church in the matter of preserving "sound doctrine." It is told to "contend earnestly for the faith" as though there was something fixed and certain to contend for, and a need of contending for it; and it is the "faith once delivered to the saints," not someone to be evolved along through the ages. The expression "damnable heresies" is entirely scriptural, heresy according to the Bible is as damnable as immorality. St.

Paul is not liberal in the modern sense of the word, when he denounces those that "trouble you, and would pervert the Gospel of Christ" and goes on to say "let them be accursed." Our liberal churches would object by saying that those who do so are both "nice" and "smart," but St. Paul foresaw this, for he says that though they be veritable St. Pauls or angels from heaven, let them be accursed, and if this seem harsh or if any think there is a mistake, he repeats the same more deliberately. "As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed." Most of the epistles are taken up with the teaching of "sound doctrine." The sharpest rebukes and fiercest denunciations are hurled against those that teach the contrary, or who are "vain babblers" or theorists "intruding into those things which they have not seen, vainly puffed up by their fleshly mind." Modern advocates of "large liberty" and "liberal views" did not receive their inspiration from the Bible, for it takes for granted throughout, that the distinction between truth and error is sharp and well-defined, and that those who will "do the will of God" shall and can "know of the doctrine" that is from God. Christ in his last message to the churches finds little fault with their charity and good works, but he finds fault with them because they had allowed false teachers to teach their false doctrines within the church. They were evidently in the same state as that of liberal churches of to-day from whom the cry of "charity and good works" is incessantly going up. Christ says he knows all about it—"the last more than the first" increased zeal in it, but he tells them he will not take it as an excuse for their spiritual whoredoms and departure from the truth, their toleration of

false teachers and sympathy with their false doctrine. Christ evidently saw in this the greatest peril to his church.

"A man that is a heretic after the first and second admonition, reject." This is the New Testament rule for dealing with heretics, those that are presumptuous and self-willed in their error can not be gotten rid of too quickly. The false liberality and slowness of church trial, that allows the heretic to sow his seed of error for months and years after he has been discovered, is a disgrace to the church and disloyalty to Christ and his truth. Wrong tendencies and false notions among lay members, are often due to ignorance and want of spiritual insight. Doctrines have been cried down, and systematic teaching of children and youth neglected. Converts have but little instruction before joining the church, and the lessons of Sunday-school and pulpit are disjointed and inadequate. Reports and statistics have become a terror to the pastors, the temptation to make a show at any rate, is great, and the prevailing liberalism offers little resistance to it. A selfish zeal to save the church and save one's self in a worldly sense becomes dominant; under this influence souls are not born again, they join without the enlightening and sanctifying influence of the Holy Spirit, which otherwise would make up in a measure for lack of instruction. The consequence is that many of the churches are just now in a condition where they are apt to mistake the howling of the wolves for the voice of the shepherd. Some of our professors of theologies have a faint suspicion that there is something in religion, but it is trouble for them to make out what it is; they have been feeding upon the husks of infidelity that were meant for the swine, till now they do not quite

know whether there is a God in heaven or whether they have a soul. Candidates for the ministry go from them, their heads crammed with infidel criticism and in their heart a morbid desire to startle the world with some new announcement. The froth of infidelity comes to the surface in their conduct, their conceit generally corresponds to their lack of spirituality. "These be thy gods, O Israel," and they are not golden calves either. A writer in a leading periodical has lately boasted that the heterodox seminaries have enough of these brazen calves provided to supply the pulpits throughout the land when the churches shall be ready to receive them, and he contemplates that by that time there will be no lack of "breadth." This is the modern tactics of infidelity. To attack the church and Christianity as avowed enemies has well-nigh ceased, but to work within the church disguised as friends and professing the faith has become the rule. The work of disintegration could be done no more effectually than through a skeptical ministry, and strenuous efforts have been made to secure control of theological seminaries.

The difficulty involved in keeping these institutions true to Christianity and their appointed mission, should by this time be seen and recognized by the churches. What is being done by them in America, has been done in other countries. In Germany, Rationalism secured a foothold in the seminaries, and through them in the pulpit. The result is that Protestant Germany has become unbelieving. What infidelity and skepticism could not have done outside as an avowed enemy of religion, it has done most effectually under the guise of friendship and the assumed name of Christian. Liberalism, likewise in England, allowed the leaven of Romanism to

be introduced in theological institutions; the result is that to-day one can hardly tell whether the Anglican Church is Protestant or Catholic, so thoroughly has it been Romanized In the Apostolic Church, the servants and ministers of various kinds were taken from the bosom of the Church, and chosen after they had demonstrated their fitness and ability. Endowed and self-supporting institutions have their life too much apart from the church and are apt to become subject to foreign influences. The pride of learning, the conceit of novelties and love of notoriety will take the place of honest striving for spiritual fitness as ministers of the church. Wherever a heap of mammon is piled up in any one place, the world, the flesh, and the devil will strain every nerve to get control. If institutions of this kind must be part of the church machinery, they can not be too strictly and certainly under her control. The church surrenders her life, independence and character, when she allows ministers and teachers to be imposed upon her that have been trained under influences apart from the church.

The church is responsible for the preservation and promulgation of the truth revealed and committed to her by Christ. Faith in this truth is the basis of all moral qualities and spiritual life. Truth about the true character of God, without a knowledge of which we cannot be God-like. Truth about Christ, involving the whole question whether God indeed has revealed himself in a special plan for the salvation of the world. Truth about the Holy Spirit, answering the question, "will God indeed dwell on the earth?" "Can we have conscious communion with God?" Truth about a future life: it is of infinite consequence that we should know how much is involved in right-doing and wrong-doing, if infinite

bliss or woe is involved, and of that importance is right doctrine on the subject. Truth about the Bible, involving the whole question, whether upon the whole, we know anything certain of what we profess. The responsibility on the part of the church of teaching and maintaining the truth in its purity, cannot be overestimated, or too much emphasized. She would be infinitely guilty, if she should allow error to be substituted for truth, or upon the whole be indifferent and negligent as to what is taught.

A church that is lacking either the power or the disposition to deal with those that teach or act contrary to the standards of the church, is not in harmony with the New Testament, neither does it fulfill the requirements of personal honor and integrity, for the one as well as the other of these demands that those who fellowship with us in the church, toward whom we sustain relations and have responsibilties, who have a right to call us brethren, should also be subject to common requirements, and be liable to be called to account if they teach or act contrary to the compact. One would suppose by the demand for liberality in faith and church government, and the pride some take in being considered liberal, that this is the fundamental and crowning glory of religion; but one may be liberal in any sense of the word, without being either religious, virtuous or honest. Christianity is not a negation of this sort. The only reason Christianty has for its existence, is the fact that there is something definite both in regard to faith and practice to be insisted upon, and that it is revealed to us, so that we know it. The church does not compel thought or belief, she compels those that do not think or believe in harmony with her, to remain separate. Her only weapon is rebuke and

expulsion. The church must take it for granted that the enemies of God and his truth are as ready now as in the days of Christ or St. Paul, to enter the fold as "wolves arrayed in sheep's clothing," and she cannot afford to neglect the repeated warnings of Christ and his apostles to guard against them, and expel them if they have "crept in unawares." If the church should conclude she has nothing worth contending for, the world will conclude she has nothing worth listening to. But this is evidently not the idea of our liberals and heretics—that there is nothing worth contending for; while they sneer at contention about the doctrines of the Bible, they are contending for their errors with desperate earnestness. And while they denounce controversies about the faith of the church, they are filling books and periodicals with controversies in favor of their pet-theories, as though life and death depended on them.

CHAPTER VIII.

FUTURE PUNISHMENT.

"For I have five brethren: that he may testify unto them lest they also come into this place of torment.—Gospel of Luke.

The speaker in our text is represented as one of a large family, who, like himself, could not be persuaded that there is a hell, neither by Scripture, nor even by a message from the Spirit world should such be vouchsafed. There are reasons for this unbelief, fear on the one hand and sympathy on the other favor it. Hells, either in this or a future world, are not objects one would contemplate from choice. If it were a mere question of inventing or imagining a better state of things than that which exists in this world, or portions of the next, as described in the Bible, it would be very easy to better things; but things are not bettered by speculations and theories. What we have to do is to find out and understand the facts as they are presented to us, and govern our faith and practice in accordance with them.

The difficulty on the part of those that would refute the "theory of hell" so called, is that there is so little theory about it, and so much fact. The worst hell ever pictured by poet or priest lies within the range of human experience in this world. We do not need to draw upon imagination at all, everything, except eternal duration may be seen or felt any time; but eternal duration

is in itself only a continuation of the present, and therefore not something new. Those that have no fear of the revelation of the Bible, may well fear the revelation of our natural life; they are equally fearful in this respect—the one is the complement and affirmation of the other. There are experiences in this life that could not be mentioned on account of their very horribleness. Unrelieved by the poetical genius of a Dante, the hells of this world and the next would not tolerate description. But a proud, vain and boastful generation might do well occasionally to ponder that what itwould be intolerable either to speak or hear, what we do not even dare to know lies all within the range of human experience, within the range of possibilities in every case. We boast of invincible courage, indomitable will power, and all that sort of thing, while the disorder of a single nerve in a poor, frail body, leaves us helpless and tormented, withering both happiness and ambition. "It is true this god did shake; his coward lips did from their color fly; and the same eyes whose bend doth owe the world, did lose their lustre."

Man has felt the awfulness of this problem of pain in all ages. The ignorant have tried to put on a bold face and defy it; the philosopher has quailed before it. The problem stares us out of countenance, although it is a very unphilosophical thing in this philosophical age to be stared out of countenance by any problem. Yet very few dare to look at it soberly, if they do not refuse to look at it at all. They excuse themselves by the modern aphorism that we must look at the bright side of things, even when the dark thrusts itself upon us as though it courted inquiry. Undoubtedly the philosophical thing is to look at all sides of life or any question connected with it. The

pessimist and optimist are equally at fault, but the latter is apt to be the worse deceived. If anyone is so constituted that he can look only at one side of life, or anything, he had better look at the side from whence danger threatens, so look that he may be aware.

It is a fair question to ask what science and civilization have done towards the solution of this problem of pain. Of course, the mere alleviation of suffering that may be effected by charity does not touch the question as we are now considering it. The discovery of anesthetics may be said to be a real achievement in the field of science. But the very fact that it has been considered a great triumph to be able to deaden the sense of pain, but for a few moments, and this at considerable risk, rather serves to emphasize the fact of our general helplessness. As for civilization, it has only made us the more sensitive to pain. It is estimated that a civilized person with nervous temperament, suffers three times as much as a savage under the same surgical operation, and civilized man is subject to mental pain and distress that the savage knows nothing of. As we cultivate and intensify life, the realms of pain and pleasure alike open before us, and in equal proportion. The pain and distress to which we become exposed is in every way equal to the pleasure and happiness we may hope to obtain, even as the degradation of character we may witness any day, is equal in proportion to the exaltation that has been attained. There is an infinitude between the two. Man has not only been able readily to conceive of the pains of hell from present experience, but as readily of the characters that fulfill the opposite conditions. The conceptions of angels and devils as painted by the great masters illustrate the extremes to which human character

tends; as we compare the two we see at once that the distinction between heaven and hell is not arbitrary, but that it exists in character to the full extent pictured in the Bible.

Philosophy has attempted to explain the problem of pain on the ground of utility. Something, undoubtedly, may be accounted for on this ground, but, upon the whole, the use it serves is rather incidental, as a solution of the problem the explanation is quite inadequate. Pain may be of use as a means of discipline. The peculiar sensitiveness of the skin may serve the purpose of warding off injury and be so intended. The heart laid bare, it is said, may be pinched without much feeling, If this however, is meant to prove that sensitiveness exists in the skin alone, we are easily undeceived. Internal diseases are not painless. Neither does pain cease when it is of no more use as a warning against injury, nor as a disciplinary agency. It continues after the injury has been accomplished and the warning vain. It continues also after an individual has become incorrigible and discipline useless. Properly speaking, all that we know about it is, that whenever there is injury there is pain, there is never pain unless there is injury. This is true of our physical as well as of our moral being. The pain continues till the injury is healed. If the injury is incurable, the pain is also incurable.

Pain of conscience, properly understood is disciplinary. It is irrelevant to speak of conscience in connection with the damned. As conscience, the divine element in the soul, is eliminated and withdrawn, actual dread of punishment becomes more and more an element in remorse, dread of punishment without any sorrow for evil

doing, till at last there is nothing of conscience left, but "a certain fearful looking for of judgment."

"Behold, therefore, the goodness and severity of God" is the language alike of revelation and nature, the impartial observer will find no more nor any less evidence of the one than of the other. But what is most pleasant to contemplate, of that there can be no question. In an age largely sympathetic and sentimental, with no lofty apprehension of moral requirements, we may look for efforts to put the best possible construction upon an evil case. The "best" under these circumstances is not likely to be the most logical. Sound reason would require us to believe that what is involved in human nature may be evolved, but the extremes of degradation and elevation, pain and joy, are alike involved. We choose the most felicitous moments of our life, enlarge upon the experience and imagine something beyond, a continuance of this we call heaven; we think of our direst experience, the severest pain we have known, and need imagine nothing more, a continuation of it would be hell, greater than we would want to think of. We have no doubt that the promise of joy and glory will be fulfilled, the seed of the rose and lily will certainly grow, develop and flourish; but the evil seed sown in hearts and cultivated, it is hoped, will somehow prove a failure, its development cut short, and its legitimate fruit fail to appear. But nature, no more than Scripture, encourages this hope. Weeds and thistles have a vitality and immortality seemingly inherent in their nature, which nothing can eradicate, while the useful plants and grains can only be cultivated into existence, and if cultivation cease they will shortly degenerate into worthless scrubs and grasses from which they had been developed. As far, then, as nature is

concerned evil may be said to have a natural immortality, but good is conditioned on careful cultivation and it looks as though the same law obtains in the moral world.

In view of the doctrine of eternal consequences indicated in nature and taught in the Scriptures, it has been suggested, and even boldly declared, that it would have been better if the world had never come into existence, than that so much woe should have been entailed. In some moods we might all second this idea, as Christ said of some persons that it would have been better for them if they had not been born; so it may be true of some worlds, that it would have been better if they had not been born. It is implied in the words of Christ that God is not responsible for the propagation and continuation of a wicked race, though for reasons known to himself, and in part revealed, he has not so far seen fit to make an end of it by divine intervention. The principal reason is undoubtedly that some good is got out of the world in spite of the evil, heaven counts even a single sinner saved a great gain. But as to the world as it now is, God does not assume the responsibility for it, nothing is taught more clearly in the Word of God than this, that the world is estranged from God, it is placed in direct opposition to God's world and kingdom. In order to be saved we must, in a spiritual sense, forsake this world and be born anew into God's world and kingdom, it is then said of the children of God, thus born, that they "are not of the world" and may not be "conformed to the world," neither "love the world," and that the world lieth in the wicked one." God created the world in the beginning and saw that it was good, but now, according to Scripture, it is another and different world. God in creating, creates conditions; men make a good or bad use

of them as they choose. It may well be said that man is as sovereign within his sphere as God within his. "Is it not written . . . I said, ye are gods . . . and the Scriptures cannot be broken," mean and humble, at times, even loathsome, as man appears in his fallen, degraded condition, there is yet in him the possibilities of all that is noble and exalted on one hand and wicked and degraded on the other, and he has it in his power to make actual these possibilities. He creates his own world; his character, destiny and environment are all of his own making. God's sovereignty is exercised in restraining and circumscribing his sphere of activity, and the Bible promises that the incorrigible wicked shall at the end of time be confined absolutely to their own world.

When it is asked what good purpose eternal punishment will serve we object to the question as irrelevant. It goes on the presumption that Scripture, as well as our experience in this world, are entirely false in what they teach on this subject. According to the teaching of both, sin is an essential evil and does not tend to serve any good purpose, this is not to be expected or hoped for. If it is sometimes possible with God to "make the wrath of man to praise him," this is an incidental benefit, but otherwise, sin and its evil are such in their very character, by voluntary action and free will, blameable and damnable in their exercise, and the results that flow from it cannot be anything but bitter and painful through time and eternity. There is never anything actually gained by violating God's laws; if that were the case, then they ought to be violated. The sooner the world finds out that sin and its consequences do not tend to any good purpose, the better it will be for the world.

It has been objected that heaven could not be happy while hell existed. This idea is natural, and will suggest itself to all. But heaven is not a thing of the future, it is now and has always been, and so with hell, to some extent it is now and has been ever since men or angels fell from their allegiance to God. Heaven is supposed to be happy now, while not only sin and suffering to a great extent exists, but when often those suffer who least deserve it, when wrong and suffering and pain is inflicted on the very children of God; while wicked men and devils are rampant, destroying God's creation, and bidding defiance to the Almighty, "deceiving, if it were possible, the very elect." Should heaven be less happy when wrong at last is righted, justice done, peace secured, and the wicked confined to their proper place? If happiness and heaven were inconsistent with worlds of sin, suffering and woe, and with an active interest in such worlds, then we do not know that heaven ever could have existed. The Bible describes the occupants of heaven as well informed and intensely interested. When a world-calamity befell this planet, it was felt in heaven, and it at once hastened to our relief. Not only are angels described as active in our behalf, studying, looking into the mystery of this ruin, and the work of redemption, and actively engaged in the work; but God did more than send the angels; he sent his only begotten Son, to save the world, or whatever might be saved. Thus the Bible describes heaven, and again as a multitude of witnesses, viewing with intense interest the struggle between right and wrong, joying in the very presence of God over one sinner that repents and is saved. We must therefore believe that the happiness of heaven is not saved by ignorance or indifference to

worlds of sin and woe; but if the battle is so strong that a single soul saved is counted a trophy worthy of great rejoicing, we may know that even omnipotence cannot do more than it has and is doing, and that sin and evil has a sovereignty of its own, which may be restrained, but cannot be forced into anything different from what it is, and that consequently heaven itself could not prevent its existence, as we know it to exist. As for the happiness of heaven, it may be built upon the same plan as happiness here; we should never be happy if we had to wait till there was absolutely no cause to the contrary. We are happy when the causes for joy preponderate. Heaven could not be actively interested in a world of sin and woe like this, without being touched by the shadow of its sorrow, but heaven may, on the other hand, have mighty causes for joy, which we can but faintly imagine.

Arguments against hell are almost wholly addressed to human sympathies. It is easy to harp upon the chords of sympathy till every nerve cries out against hell, both present and future, but that does not alter the facts as we know them and have them revealed to us. Pain and distress, the awful and terrible, the ugly and loathsome meets us at every step, even though our sympathies cry out against them. Neither does it answer any better to couple this appeal with reference to God's love and mercy. We must interpret the love of God and his whole character, consistent with all the facts observable, and all the passages of Scripture, and not in the light of a single class of facts or passages. If our natural sympathies suffer, then we must conclude it is because there are moral considerations surpassing them in importance.

When the only begotten of God came into this world,

as determined in the counsel of the Father, he did not undertake to disabuse us of any extravagant notion about sin and its consequences. He did not soothe us with the assurance that it was a phantasm that soon would disappear. He emphasized the fact both of sin and its woe, his love found its first expression in a call to repentance, only as sin was forsaken could hell be abated.

At the beginning of his ministry in his sermon on the mount and often afterwards, he uses this expression, "Shall be cast into hell," and we do not need to look up the etymology of the word "hell" or its equivalent in the original, to find out what Christ understood by it, he explains it fully if we wish for his opinion or teaching on the subject; he tells us that there "the worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched." Evidently he meant to impress upon his hearers the fact, that the fire of Gehenne, into which the wicked are cast, is not like the fires of this world, temporary and quenchable; likewise that the soul cast into it, is not like a worm easy shriveled up in a fire, but deathless. It is a contrast of what is eternal with things that are temporal, and the emphasis is on this fact. In other passages, he describes the hopeless despair of the place as that of "outer darkness, where there shall be weeping, wailing and gnashing of teeth." Here again we find the same emphasis, the darkness is the "outer" or uttermost, beyond which is nothing else, and the despair described characteristic of such a place. Those who wish to escape from the teaching of Christ on this subject, have gone so far as to call in doubt whether the words eternal, everlasting, forever and ever mean what they express, when used with reference to the punishment of the wicked; but the teaching of Christ on this subject is everywhere a contrast

of what is temporal with what is eternal, and favor this meaning. Aside from this, the effort to make out eternal to be temporal when used with reference to the wicked, while in the very same passage it is allowed to be eternal when used with reference to the saved, is an effort that reduces interpretation to a mere science of evasion and equivocation. We sometimes nowadays use the words eternal, everlasting, etc., in poetry or slang phrases, and take liberties with their meaning; but whenever the meaning is appropriate to the subject, no such liberties can consistently be taken. But the teaching of Christ by contrasts makes discussion of these words superfluous, the eternal and hopeless state of the wicked is everywhere emphasized. "Be not afraid of them that kill the body," says the Savior in one passage, "and after that have no more that they can do. But I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear"—here again we mark the contrast and the peculiar emphasis laid upon it—"fear him which after he had killed had power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, fear him." In the representative description of the rich man and Lazarus, we find the word Hades used in the larger sense, as the common world of the dead, both good and bad, so far accommodating himself to the ideas of the times, only he does not allow the idea of contiguity. He describes the good and bad, separated by a "great gulf," impassible and immutably fixed; Lazarus is seen "afar off." The picture of Dives tormented in the flames, and the dialogue between him and father Abraham is familiar. The fact emphasized by Christ is that of unmitigated torment, without hope of escape. The day of judgment as set forth by Christ is a counterpart. "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his an-

gels." "And these shall go away into everlasting punishment." The same hopelessness and endlessness is taught incidentally in the statement about sin against the Holy Ghost, which has no forgiveness, "either in this world nor in the world to come." Christ, so far from making his own suffering a substitute for the suffering of all mankind, irrespective of character, warns us, that "if this is done in a green tree, what shall be done in the dry." The teaching of Christ in regard to the future punishment of the wicked, as referred to briefly, is not found in isolated passages; it is not aside for itself in a corner where it might easily be eliminated, it finds expression naturally in his general teaching; it is referred to oftener and taught more fully than any other single doctrine. It is taught by plain statements and illustrated in most of his parables. Perhaps there is nothing more solemnly impressive in any language than the way he sets forth the consternation and despair of wicked ones, who, deceived and unconscious of their damned state, come even as it were to the doors of heaven, only to be turned away with the "I know you not, depart." We find this in solemn statements, and illustrated by parables.

Skeptical persons, that do not know the Bible, generally imagine that the doctrine of future punishment has been derived from some of the minor characters of Bible-writers, perhaps the "stern old Prophets." There is unanimity on the part of Bible writers on the subject, but it is Jesus and John, the two supposed to be most tender-hearted, that have supplied the church with the ideas embodied in their theology and teaching about hell and future punishment; perhaps for the very reason that it should not be taught due to any peculiar harshness on the part of those who taught it. In our illustrated

Bibles, we have a picture of John the Apostle in the form of a sentimental woman; this is the popular notion of divine love, but Christ knowing the character of John better, gave him the surname Boanerges—Son of Thunder. In his book of Revelation, we have hell described as "a lake, burning with fire and brimstone," where "the smoke of their burning ascend forever and ever, and also as a "bottomless pit," a very suggestive figure of hopeless descend. No one can wish to dwell upon these utterances by Jesus and John, in order to add to their terror; neither should anyone dare to belittle the meaning embodied in them.

It is not enough, however, that Christ declares and describes the state of the wicked after death, but such are actually brought before us in the history of his life and ministry in the shape of disembodied spirits, possessed of the faculties of intelligence and character. They are called devils or demons. Where they came from, we do not know, but the fact that they found this earth a congenial place, and the minds and bodies of evil men fit mediums for their activity and influence, prove that they must have originated either in this world, or in some world like ours. The activity of disembodied wicked spirits is connected with the whole of Christ's ministry, from the time the devil came to him in the wilderness of his temptation, till he entered Judas before his betrayal. Many encounters with them are related; Christ rebuked them, resisted them and cast them out. He asked them questions and they answered him. They showed intelligence and knowledge beyond that of men. They knew Christ and addressed him as "the holy one." "What have we to do with thee, art thou come to torment us?"

What had they to do with him: his message of mercy was evidently not for them; they never asked for it, neither did Christ offer it to them. It would have been a chance for restoration, if there ever was such a chance; but this is never hinted. The presence of Christ only filled them with rage and increased their malignity. Between them and Christ there was nothing but incongruity and deadly antipathy. They expected a day of judgment, after which their liberty would cease and they would be confined to their proper place. Of this they reminded Christ, and sneeringly asked him if he had come to hasten the time. They evidently had a knowledge of the future, which men have not.

Belief in disembodied spirits and their presence in this world has been common in all ages, and investigations of modern times have tended to place the belief above that of a mere superstition, even in the opinion of those naturally skeptical. Only the most ignorant and bigoted treat the subject with a sneer. We may suppose that the very presence of Christ revealed the devils as they have not been revealed at any other time. Evil is always stirred by the presence of goodness. Antipathies declare themselves as well as affinities. We see examples of this in a small way in our every day life, evil men when brought into conflict with virtue and goodness, exhibit some of the rage, frenzy and gnashing of teeth of the demons in Christ's time. The revelation of this to a higher degree is accounted for by the higher degree of antipathy, when the perfect holy comes into contact with the perfect wicked. Moreover, there was in and about Christ something of the other world, which the devils recognized, and which in a sense brought them on common ground. For this reason we never notice either

surprise or fear on the part of Christ in his encounters with the devils. What we would regard as supernatural and be startled at, Christ meets as something with which he is perfectly familiar. It is the forces of the supernatural and invisible world that meet; Christ, belonging to another world revealing himself in this, compels the devils to reveal themselves when they come into contact. Thus for a season the veil is lifted.

These revelations from the spirit world teach that wicked persons live on after death and remain wicked. There is no expression of hope, either of restoration or annihilation, they take it for granted they will continue as they are, only fearing they will fare worse. If it were possible with God to annihilate evil spirits, then we would suppose Satan and the devils would have been annihilated ages ago, seeing they have not only been of no use, but have wrought much harm.

In comparing the teaching of Christ and the Bible on this subject with that of modern liberalism and the new theology we notice a sharp contrast. On the one hand there is an evident intention to set before men a solemn warning of the consequences of a wicked life to inspire them with terror at the possibilities that lie before them in their downward career. On the other hand there is an equally avowed effort to allay this terror, to contradict this warning, to minimize the danger and counteract the impression made by the Word of God. It is not a mere contradiction of words and passages, it is a plain contradiction of the spirit and teaching of the Bible on this subject. Of course they easily gain their object, for men do not like to face the result of a godless life. They are willing to be persuaded there is no hell, or that it does not amount to much; the most superficial

reasoning to this effect is apt to have more weight than the twofold revelation of the Bible and experience. The avidity with which they seize on such ways of escape as second probation, restoration or annihilation, rather than availing themselves of the one way of escape God has provided, is additional proof that they are deceiving themselves. When men flee from repentance and reformation to lay hold on such schemes, we may know that they are "refuges of lies." There is no end of efforts to provide the ungodly with such nowadays. Hell is not likely to be abated by these "refuges of lies" so industriously provided and seized upon with equal avidity. In the words of Scripture "ye have strengthened the hands of the wicked, that he should not return from his wicked way, by promising him life."

No one should undertake to promise the impenitent a way of escape other than that God has provided, or a second chance besides the one God has set before us, unless he can make good his promises. In taking upon himself the responsibility of promising the impenitent a second probation in the other world, does he know in fact that he can provide the impenitent with a second probation. The impenitent is quite likely to depend on the promise, for there is scarcely one of them but what like to put off their repentance and reformation at least as long as they think it safe. Dives asked for someone to be sent from the spirit world to warn his relations that there is no second probation, and that they had better do their repentance here: no one was sent, however, the answer was that Moses and the prophets are sufficient for anyone who will at all accept warning. The church has so considered in all ages. Those that have theories of a second probation have to go outside the Bible for them,

or at best depend on the science of evasion and equivocation. It is not merely that a great many passages are against it, but the whole tenor of the Bible is decidedly opposed to it. Sinners are warned in view of approaching death and judgment, after judgment the eternal "come" or "depart;" warned in view of the possibility of "dying in their sins," this would not need the emphasis Christ puts upon it, if they might repent of their sins and be saved after death; warned against hardening their hearts, for "to-day is the day of salvation," and the hardening process, we know from experience, is very rapid. "Watch," says Christ, "for ye know not what day or hour the Son of man cometh;" to be taken unprepared is, according to Christ, the loss of our chance; this it would not be if there was room for preparation in the world to come. But more than all, Christ brings before us in parables and illustrations departed spirits, who seemingly did repent, or desired a chance to do so, but the door remained unopened, as in the parable of the foolish virgins, and those "many," who "in that day" should plead for entrance, but Christ represents himself as refusing their overtures and tells them to "depart." Neither does the Bible make any difference in favor of the heathen. St. Paul argues their case in the first chapter to the Romans, and comes to the conclusion that they are without excuse. "Fewer stripes," says Christ, "for those that can plead ignorance, but the guilt essentially the same; all the guilt and much of the ignorance is willful; if they had loved the light, they would not have been walking all this time in darkness. The heathen world is very much like the rest of the world; it is true of them as of vast numbers in Christian lands, that they love the darkness which involves them. The church in

general believe that the atonement of Christ availed for all, and that those who feared God and worked righteousness are accepted through Christ, although they have not heard of his life and death. But the Bible also teaches that although they may be saved without this knowledge, yet they are likely not to be, but may if it is brought to them. It clearly teaches that by our efforts, or our neglect, we may "save a soul from death," or cause someone to "perish." "If thou dost not speak to save the wicked from his way, that wicked man shall die in his iniquity." Scripture represents the servants of God as watchmen upon the walls of a city, to warn of impending danger; our second probationists are rather interested in proving to us that there is no immediate danger, but "when they shall say, Peace and safety, then sudden destruction cometh upon them, and they shall not escape."

While what is taught by Christ and the Bible in regard to the future of the wicked, all lies within the range of possibilities, and is only the degradation and pain involved in our nature, and which may be evolved in future ages; yet it is scarcely possible for human mind and nerve in our present state to entertain a vivid realization of it, or make it part of our consciousness. As a general thing, those that are confessedly least able to do so, are most forward with their interpretations and explanations. But the Amighty has put them under no obligation to explain it, much less of explaining it away. We may leave to Christ the responsibility of his own teaching. If we presume to teach the doctrine of Christ on this subject, we may do so in his very words, and should be particularly careful not to go beyond them, if mind and heart is terrified and muddled on the question.

We can not read the Bible without being impressed by the fact that the sense of fear in man is very largely appealed to. What is natural in this respect has come to be looked upon with much disfavor; it is supposed to be against the dignity of man to appeal to his sense of fear. Man, indeed, even at his worst, is capable of the conception of disinterested virtue; but the idea is rather an abstraction than a realization. Man has never seen virtue or vice, wrong or right, wholly apart from their legitimate consequences, and it would probably be impossible in one's mind wholly to disassociate them. Man, even at his best, is not so impressed with the distinction between right and wrong, but what he may need to have it emphasized by the different results attending. And the measure of the distinction is seen in the infinite difference between the extremes of the bottomless pit, to which he may descend, and the exaltation to which he may attain. This difference teaches the infinite distinction between right and wrong, virtue and vice, and we perceive how much the one ought to be loved for its own sake, and the other abhorred.

We are treating of fear as a motive in moral action; of course, there is a great deal of fear that is ignoble. We can imagine a state in which there would be no emotion of fear, but it is very certain that man is not in that state. He is not dignified above fear, unless he is raised above danger and pain, but these are the most familiar experiences of our world. Man is surrounded by elements and forces, on which he depends for life and comfort, but which may at any time overwhelm him with danger and pain, that he has neither power to resist nor strength to endure. His body is a marvel of sensitive-

ness, physical pain may be produced, that one would not willingly submit to, even for a few minutes, to gain the joys of a lifetime. His mind and soul is equally sensitive; what agony of bereavement, of disappointed hopes, lost opportunities, wasted life, remorse; what depth of misery in a human look of anguish, or shriek of despair. Man has in his nature capacity for pain and degradation, enough to overwhelm him with fear, if he realized it. The boasted courage of those that decry the motive of fear, is but the cowardice that dare not face the facts that are most common in life. Rational and scriptural fear is but the proper realization of these facts and the wisdom of it is in comprehending their meaning and profiting by the application. The purpose may be defeated when the carnal mind refuses to yield to this wisdom; in this case the subject may either drown his fear in dissipation, or the carnal mind may seek a refuge in fanaticism and superstitious performings; he may assume a false zeal that would fain demontrate claims to piety and God's favor by the very crimes which God, above all things, abhors.

Even in the true Scriptural sense, fear is not the noblest of emotions, neither is man, perverted, worldly and wicked at once capable of the noblest emotions. Fear must be the beginning of his wisdom, the rational fear of the Gospel, a sober apprehension of danger, a realization of the nature of sin and its consequences. This fear on the part of the sinner is the most natural and rational of all emotions, and is the foundation of all true work of spiritual awakening. Where it is lacking, repentance is lacking and the work is superficial. It is inspired, not necessarily by noise and fierceness, but by spiritual earnestness, combined with a faithful presenta-

tion of the facts of Revelation and Nature. In the series of great revivals between the latter part of the '20's and '57, in which Charles G. Finney was the leading spirit, we find it indicated in his sermons that special stress was laid upon three doctrines; first, the damnable nature of sin and its everlasting woe, the atonement of Christ a vicarious sacrifice for sin, the absolute need of regeneration and a holy character. The converts of these revivals constituted the marrow and sinews of the church for half a century, whole communities were morally regenerated, a moral stamina was evolved which made it possible to overthrow slavery, and came near doing the same with the liquor traffic.

CHAPTER IX.

THE CHURCH AND THE LODGE.

"They have run greedily after error."—Jude.

"The carnal mind is enmity against God," says the Holy Scriptures;" "it is not subject to God's law, neither indeed can be." The law of God in its highest application, is spiritual, this the carnal mind fails to apprehend, it does not even perceive the relation and the obligation, to which it ought to be subject; hence the success of false systems of religion, even in the presence of the true. The false systems may be either wholly outside Christianity, or they may be perversions, even as Christianity has been perverted in all ages, eliminating the spiritual element, and retaining only what pertains to outward rules of conduct, coupled with rites and ceremonials to represent the spiritual. It is a striking fact that where Christianity has been sufficiently perverted to suit the carnal mind, there the American Secret Society systems of religious symbolism and ceremonials are but little known; but here, where there is no State Church, and where the churches, at least to a large extent, recognize the spiritual element in Christianity, and in some measure insist on their requirements, here this kind of societies flourish to a surprising extent. Men must have some kind of religion, and if the state does

not furnish the kind they want, they will see to it themselves.

Where secret societies do exist in foreign countries, they have generally some distinct object apart from the religious and social, sometimes opposition to civil or ecclesiastic tyranny. Thus, Freemasonry in Roman Catholic countries, has the avowed object of opposition to the encroachment of ecclesiastical authority, but here it exists mainly for social and religious purposes, coupled, no doubt, with more or less distinct plans for mutual protection and self-aggrandizement. What is true in this respect of Freemasonry is true of its various imitations too numerous to mention.

The stress laid upon the religious feature of the lodge depends largely on the object in view, with which one has joined it. To some the social advantages are the main attractions; to others mutual help and insurance is a consideration; this should not be called benevolence as it generally is, it is not benevolence to pay when an obligation has been incurred; the societies are in this respect no more benevolent than a common insurance society and often not so much so, for the lodges generally spend more in keeping up the show than an insurance company does on running expenses. Professional men, including ministers of the Gospel, join the societies for professional advantages to advertise themselves and get custom. Politicians join them and run them as political machines. The timid join them for protection, and the aggressive to further their schemes; and here is one of the causes why "judgment standeth afar off, and justice doth not overtake" the transgressor. Justice must labor under disadvantages where the population is parceled up into secret societies, for whatever the

avowed object of these societies, they can hardly fail to foster a spirit of clannishness and partiality unfavorable to an even balance and fair dealing. A secret society is a war measure, in a population united on the common ground of justice and patriotism, it could have no place; when found it must be an object of suspicion and lead to counter-societies organized in defense. But it is not our object to deal with this aspect of the question, but simply to view it from a religious point of view.

Whatever of mixed motives there may be in joining these societies, or whatever regard one may have for the religion of the lodge, that this religion is a main feature and prominent characteristic is patent without any investigation of their oft-revealed mysteries. So much is this the case that the societies may fairly be called religious institutions, with religious systems, their claims in this respect are scarcely a whit behind that of any church, and their religious features are as pronounced and well-defined. One may not take any stock in this religion but it is there all the same, and it is there to fill a want and answer a purpose, and undoubtedly it does answer the purpose of a religious system to the bulk of the members. Nearly half the population of the United States is outside the churches. The lodge may fairly be said to be their church, and its religion their dependence. And it fairly claims to fill this want and answer this purpose in every respect, as for instance when a Masonic manual of the highest authority says of the master mason after taking the third degree. "We now find man complete in morality and intelligence, with a stay of religion added, to insure him protection of the Deity and guard him against ever going astray. These three degrees thus form a perfect and harmonious whole, nor can we

conceive that anything can be suggested more, which the soul of man requires." In a manual of the same lodge we read at the taking of the first degree: "There he stands without our portals on the threshold of his new Masonic life, in darkness, helplessness and ignorance, having been wandering amid the errors and covered over with the filth and pollutions of this outer and profane world, he comes inquiringly to our doors, seeking the new birth, and asking a withdrawal of the veil which conceals divine truth from his uninitiated right." To the professed Christian who joins the lodge this confession may not be wholly out of order, but in regard to the promises there is more doubt. Quotations like the above might be multiplied, but they will suffice to show the claims of the lodge as a soul-saving religion. It is practically the same in all the various imitations of Freemasonry. These claims find likewise expression in the symbolism and ceremonials of the lodge room. They have their temples, their chaplain, priests or grand high priest, prayers and confessions, or what answer to it in their initiation; their solemn rites and symbols illustrating their religious and moral teaching, and to crown it all, they have their grand lodge above, where they promise to meet, and their solemn funeral rites, where the departed is speeded on his way to said upper lodge with much prayer and ceremony. In the words of the quotation, "what more can be suggested which the soul of man requires" if the claims and pretensions are well-founded then what is provided is sufficient, if they are not well founded then it is a serious mockery.

It has been objected by some that Christ's name is generally omitted from their prayers and teaching, and in some instances purged from the Bible they use. As

an objection against the religion of the lodge it is not well taken. In that they refrain from mixing the name of Christ with their service and worship, they do well, it would only be added blasphemy to use it in connection with it, and the use of it would certainly not make it any the more Christian. The mere use of the name of Christ in prayers and ritual does not constitute Christianity or a church.

It is said by naturalists that man is a religious animal, he will and must have some religion; if the true does not suit, false ones will be invented. And yet it is not to be supposed that these false religions will have nothing whatever of truth and beauty about them. Man, in his fallen state, has a complex nature, he is not a devil even when he is not a saint. While his mind is carnal and does not comprehend spiritual truths in their highest application, yet he can appreciate moral qualities and the beautiful in character. If we should suppose the spirit of this world to plan a religion to suit this complex nature, how would he go to work; he would not produce a system of which nothing good could be said, that would offend the natural taste of man by its very ugliness. If Satan himself should come among us would he come with horns and hoof protruding, does he wish to alarm us, would he not rather come "arrayed like an angel of light?" And if this, who is called a "murderer from the beginning" should attempt to poison the minds and hearts of the children of men, would he present the poison unadulterated, admitting it to be such, would he not rather disguise it in some semblance of truth? Satan is a fisher of man, but he does not expect him to bite on the naked point, some bait must envelop it.

But suppose, again, that the spirit of this world

should wish to invent a religion for the children of this world, how would the secret society system as represented by Freemasonry answer. It is not unadulterated moral poison—there is a semblance of truth about it. The ugliness is not so exposed but what the veriest worldling might mistake it for the beauty of an angel of light. Indeed, it is generally said to be beautiful, that is, the symbols, ritual, etc. There is something for the worldling to bite on besides the naked hook. There is morality enough to satisfy any respectable worldling, and religion enough to suit his tastes and appetites. Besides this, there are titles, distinctions and honors; the lodge has raked together everything of this sort in the whole wide world, civil and ecclesiastic, it is all at the disposal of the lodge, as though its evil spirit perfectly understood the ridiculous vanity and pride of men and was willing to gratify them to the utmost. Is it one reason why the lodge mania is worse in America than elsewhere, because our democratic institutions do not furnish enough of this glitter and show to suit the natural craving of a depraved appetite.

The Christian religion teaches that the world is corrupted and estranged from God, is drifting away from God with a tendency so strong that humanity unaided could not resist it, nor be saved from the inevitable result of this drifting. They are possessed and ruled by a spirit adverse to God, and which can have no fellowship with God; hence, unless man is changed and the tendency of his life set in the opposite direction, he will be lost to God and heaven eternally. Man is sufficiently depraved to be helpless in himself to effect this change unaided, but God has done what he could to help us. He has

revealed himself in this world both by his Son and by his Spirit. The first, a visible revelation both of God's love and justice bringing about conditions that make it possible for man to be saved in harmony with the requirements both of love and justice. The revelation of God's Spirit in this world is a felt presence and conscious power, having access to the hearts and minds of men, and may change heart and mind when open to this influence, this change the Bible calls regeneration or conversion, it has been brought about when man is ruled by God's Spirit, when he recognizes his relation to God as a child to his father, and is conscious of communion with God. The Bible makes a sharp distinction between those that are regenerated and those that are not, it is the children of God and the children of light in contrast with the children of this world and of darkness. Whatever may be the possibilities of good in these latter in their natural unsaved state they are called "dead in trespasses and sins," "their understanding darkened because of sin that dwelleth in them"; they are not conscious of, neither do they perceive the spiritual relation of God to his children. Christ and his apostles formed the regenerated children of God into a brotherhood called the church. It was meant to be a visible union based on the spiritual union which exists between God's children.

Remembering this radical distinction referred to above, we may appreciate the force of the words of an Apostle when he says: "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers, for what fellowship had righteousness with unrighteousness, and what communion had light with darkness, what concord had Christ with Belial, or what part had he that believed with an infidel—where-

fore come out from among them and be ye separate.' Consider one of these supposed children of God, a brother in their brotherhood, finding their companionship insufficient or unsatisfactory, joining a brotherhood of those the Bible calls the children of this world and of darkness. Having had his mind enlightened by the Spirit of God, he nevertheless seeks knowledge and light in the lodge of those the Scriptures represent as having their understanding darkened because of sin that dwelled in them. Having, in the words of Scripture, tasted the heavenly gift and been made partaker of the Holy Ghost, "having tasted the good word of God and the power of the world to come," he nevertheless develops an unaccountable taste for the fooleries of the lodge. Supposed to know and enjoy the true religion of Christ, he presents himself to the lodge for new light, and takes up with the religious show of those the Word calls "dead in trespasses and sins."

But the lodge has foreseen that objections of this sort might arise, and it stands ready with this promise to the candidate to be initiated, that the obligations to which he has to submit will not interfere with the duties he owes to God, his family and the State. It is a good deal to take the word of the lodge for this, for in doing so we allow them to define for us what are the duties we owe to God and our fellowmen. The obligations direct, and what is involved, cannot be fully disclosed beforehand for that is part of the secret, but they are definite and unchangeable, the same for all who join. The promise of the lodge therefore amounts to this, that in their own opinion, there is nothing about the obligations contrary to our duties as patriots and Christians. Even a worldly man with a high sense of honor might well

pause before he allows the lodge to determine for him what are his duties, and how they would be affected by the lodge obligations, for in doing so he practically surrenders his own judgment and conscience. But to the Christian a radical difficulty arises, he professes that by his conversion and consequent illumination by the Holy Ghost, he has received new light concerning his duties toward God and his fellowmen, and must henceforth measure them by a different standard from that of the world. The lodge may consist of respectable moral people, but they are not the church of God's regenerated children, they are what Christ calls "the world," and in spite of respectability the Bible declares them "dead in trespasses and sin," who "do not discern the things of the spirit of God." When the professed Christian therefore, allows them to determine for him what are his duties toward God and his fellowmen he renounces his own claim to spiritual illumination, and allows those to be his teachers who according to his faith are wholly unable to judge of his duties toward God and his fellowmen. In acknowledging the "Worshipful Master" of the lodge he practically renounces Christ, who said one is your Master and no one can serve two. In joining a brotherhood of the children of this world he slights the brotherhood of God's children, for, according to his faith, the two are as distinct as light and darkness.

But perhaps he does not perceive this distinction, his church is in such a state that there is apparently little difference. This would not affect his obligation as a Christian; he must recognize the church, and the distinction between it and the world as it is set before him in the Word of God. If the church is not what it ought to be he must labor to make it; if others are not what they

ought to be it does not relieve him from the obligation of being what Christ requires.

But it may be he joins them as a mere matter of stratagem; he hopes to do them good, to bring them into the church. To put himself in a false position for the sake of this would be a serious fraud, involving a great deal of lying. And the expectation would not be reasonable, for in joining them he endorses them and their institution as good enough for him and them. He acknowledges not only that they are good enough, but better than himself, for he has to assume the place of a novice or disciple and accept them as teachers and masters.

But members of the lodges are largely members of the churches, the minister himself may be a member, and they are all pronounced good and efficient in church work. There are many standards of goodness, and one may be good whether a Pagan or Jew, a Christian or an infidel, but if what is popularly known as being "good" is all that is required, then the Christian religion would be a superfluity, for it is well known that men can be good in this sense without it. It would also, in this case, be mistaken, for it does not admit that this "goodness" is good enough.

A minister though a lodge member may be successful in church work, neither grace nor faith is needed for this kind of success, and some of our churches look as though they had been built up by unsanctified hands and "untempered mortar." Success in winning souls to Christ cannot be too highly commended, but the church is apt to fall into the error of the world, and worship success no matter of what kind or how achieved. It is not true, however, that as a general thing they are successful in building up churches, even though they are willing to

build them up in any way and by any means. Only a very small per centage of our young men are in the churches, the bulk of them are in the lodges and the saloons.

The secret lodge system is practically one, they are all sprouts from the same root. The minor orders that have a more well-defined purpose, such as temperance, patriotism, insurance, etc., may indeed make it a real object to work for such purposes, but on moral and religious ground they are open to the same objections as Freemasonry, of which they are imitations. They constitute themselves distinct brotherhoods, which is not that of Christ, they have their grand masters more or less supreme, they all have religious rituals, chaplains, prayers, and a grand lodge above where they meet each other after death on the ground of lodge fellowship and faithfulness to the lodge while on earth. There is yet a verse of an old temperance hymn ringing in our ears that we used to sing in a temperance society, which, although open, had some of the belongings of the lodge; it runs thus: "Forever then forever, pure water be our cry—till over Jordan's river, we pass triumphantly. Then where in scenes of glory, where Eden's waters flow we will tell our temperance story of heaven begun below." Pretty in words, but false in sentiment; we passed over Jordan's river triumphantly on the strength of the single virtue of temperance. We did not "sing the song of Moses and the Lamb" beyond the river, but simply our temperance story; our heaven begun on earth to be continued above, rested on the sole virtue of temperance. Secret societies, one and all, express the same kind of sentiment in hymns, ritual, and direct teaching. It has become a "stock in trade" argument with the minor orders to defend their

religious parade by the custom in Congress and like bodies to open a session with prayer, but the analogy is lacking in the most essential parts. A body of men calls a Christian minister to offer a Christian prayer in his capacity as a Christian minister, the lodge does not do this, they have one duly qualified in his capacity as lodge brother, he need not be a Christian either nominally or in fact, all the religion required of him is that of the lodge. He represents this religion in his prayers and otherwise in his capacity as chaplain, he offers his prayer, not in the capacity of a Christian brother or minister, but in that of a lodge brother and in harmony with the religious system of the lodge, be it what it will. There is as marked distinction between this and Christianity as there is between it and any other distinct system of religion.

CHAPTER X.

DOCTRINE OF SANCTIFICATION.

"It is written, Be ye holy for I am holy."—Peter.

When a soul has surrendered itself to the power of the Holy Spirit and is regenerated, it is believed by Christians that this power continues and that its effect is a sanctifying influence under which a soul is perfected in the likeness of God. About this process of sanctification, there are two theories among Protestants, and the Catholics have one of their own. One party among Protestants believe that the process is gradual, the end or perfection of which they do not profess to be able to lay their hands on and say—here is it. This party points to passages in the Bible that speak of "growth in grace and the knowledge of the Lord," "growing up into a perfect manhood," the kingdom of God within the soul or abroad in the world, like a leaven working gradually, or like a plant developing "first the blade, then the ear, and afterwards the full corn in the ear." A smaller but considerable party among the Protestants; while they believe the process may be gradual, at the same time hold, that it may be dispensed with altogether, and the soul at once by an act of faith and prayer become entirely sanctified or perfected. This absolute work in the soul they describe as something like a second regeneration, for which reason they sometimes call it a second

conversion, second blessing, etc. Their main dependence is passages in the Bible where entire sanctification or perfection is set before us as a standard after which we must strive, or an object for our aim and attainment. The fact that it seems to be required is to them sufficient reason for believing it can be attained, and they demand to know if God has set before us a goal that is unattainable.

The Catholic doctrine of sanctification is more complex. The peculiarity of this church, in its care to relieve lay members of responsibility except toward the church, finds expression in their doctrine of sanctification. Lay members are relieved of the ancient obligation of saintship which the Bible imposes on all, and in place thereof a certain class in the church is endued with the character and office of saints. It is believed that these may not only go far in the process of sanctification, but go farther than there is any need of. A capacity for this may at first seem incredible, but when we remember the Catholic standard of morality as it was in the middle ages, and as it still is in Catholic countries, we may not wonder that some have been considered more than good enough. This superfluity of goodness is thought to be deposited with the church, and those who have come short of the required standard may obtain what they want for a consideration. Adoration of, and prayer to these departed saints, become in order also for the purpose of becoming partaker in their merits and intercessions. It was around this very point that the reformation started: the church happened to be unusually hard up for money, and offered to sell out morality and the fear of God entirely to get the needed cash; this provoked the righteous soul of Luther, and the spell was broken. Protestants differ

from the Catholic Church in this, that they believe God is abundantly rich in grace and mercy, and does not need to make merchandise for the poor virtues of doubtful saints in order to supplement his own infinite resources, and that he utterly refuses to divide his power, honor and worship with Catholic saints or anyone else. The Catholic Church has a place in their creed for grace, faith and repentance, but it is difficult to determine just where it comes in, with merits of saints, merits worked out by penances, merits purchased of the priest, final absolution and purgatory, there seems little need of anything further to make sure of salvation.

The Catholics not only believe in partial but in entire sanctification, so much so that they profess none can enter heaven without it. Here was an opportunity for an infallible church with a purpose in view. God had not revealed what he would do with the infirmities that might cling to the Christian as he departed this world, perhaps he did not think it was necessary for us to know, but the church was equal to the occasion; they supplemented the revelation of the Almighty with a plan of their own in the shape of a purgatory, where imperfect saints might be perfected in purifying fires. As a financial speculation, purgatory has been a great success, there is money in the saying of masses for afflicted souls, but otherwise it is not known that anyone has had use for the invention.

The object in view in redemption is plainly to produce a character in man that shall make him fit for heaven and its company, fit for God and his glory. This he can only be as he resembles God in thought, feeling, desire and final purpose. The sum of this character is called holiness. Character, we know, is a personal mat-

ter, it cannot be purchased or earned, it must be developed or wrought out. God and man may help us to make character, but none can impose it upon us as a gift or compliment, the help and influence from God may be in the nature of free gifts, graces and favors undeserved, and as natural in their operation upon our mind and heart, as that of an earthly friend in his efforts to help and influence us. Those influences alone cannot produce character, it must depend on the use we make of them, but taken together, the various influences and the way we choose to resist or yield to them will result in character, be it what kind it will. God represents himself in the Bible as working in many ways and by various means to produce his own character or likeness in us. He has, in the first place, revealed his character to us in his only begotten Son sent into the world. Christ revealed the character of God in a two-fold manner: first, by his life and example, and in an equal degree by the revelation of God's love and justice in the plan of redemption. The record of this whole revelation of Christ in this world we have in the Bible and nowhere else. Also, here we have recorded all that led up to the coming of Christ and what followed after as the complement, the revelation of God through the prophets and apostles, with instructions, exhortations and warnings, both to believe in God's revelation of himself and act in harmony with our faith. But the Bible also teaches that the Spirit of God is abroad in the world, that he has access to the minds and hearts of men, even of those that have not yielded to his influence; but he is said to dwell with those that have surrendered themselves to his power and guidance. Moreover, the Bible teaches that God may affect and influence us by his providence in this

world, trials and afflictions as well as blessings and whatever belong to the discipline of life is ascribed to God. Both saint and sinner is subject to this discipline, to the one a means of bringing to repentance, to the other a help in the process of sanctification. These trials are spoken of as purifying fires; "I have chosen them in the furnace of affliction," "He shall purge them as silver is purged." We may say that there is yet a fourth way in which God works both for the salvation of sinners and the sanctification of Christians, it is by the church. Those that are indeed God's children are a sanctifying power in the world.

In making mention of perfection, a kind of perfection is implied in the fact of being a Christian. In being converted our will must have been made perfect to love and serve the Lord. Though our love and service may not be perfect, our purpose must be. We must be perfectly sincere. Without this perfect consecration of the will there can be no conversion. But although the will is thus sanctified and consecrated, our thoughts, desires, imaginations and affections may not be so perfectly subject to it as to make them perfect. And this, in like manner, is true of our judgment. Although this is not in the strictest sense part of our moral nature, yet our moral nature and all our acts are affected by it, and unless it is perfect our moral nature cannot be. Even as St. Paul speaks of the understanding being darkened by sin that dwelleth in us, this is written more especially with reference to the unconverted, but this darkened understanding is not at once made perfect by conversion. The need of a sanctifying influence in all parts of our being is again emphasized by St. Paul when he prays to God that our whole being, soul, body and spirit, may be

sanctified and blameless. A quickening of our intellectual powers is always noticed in any true conversion, sometimes as remarkable as the moral change.

This sanctification of the whole being is a development or process. It is not accomplished by any single means or act, be it either faith or prayer. We read that gifts, or special power for a special purpose, was imparted at once by the Holy Spirit, generally in connection with prayer and the laying on of hands, but never that a perfect character or entire sanctification was thus imparted. The higher regions of the soul's development is not reached in a single leap or bound. There is no short cut by which the struggles and strivings, the discipline and labors of soul, mind and heart can be dispensed with. The noblest traits of character, and the well balanced symmetrical whole, is not produced at once by the excitement of a holiness meeting. Faith and prayer and meetings are indeed means in the process; so is truth, "sanctify us by thy truth" so is the various discipline of life, to which much efficacy is ascribed in the Bible, and so in short is everything that tends to make us better.

About perfection in the absolute sense, it is not wise for us to pretend to know. Man with his finite mind does not comprehend what is absolute. Perfection once walked the earth, but was mistaken for a criminal and hanged on a tree. In a relative sense, men are sometimes said to be perfect, as Job who is said to have been a perfect man and one that feared God, perfect in the sense that no serious fault could be found about him. His own estimate of man's perfection in comparison with God's absolute perfection is such that in the presence of it, he exclaims "I am vile." And he confessed "how should

man be just with God, if he will contend with him, he cannot answer him one of a thousand." Men are proverbially prone to overlook their own faults, they have need of praying with David "cleanse thou me from secret faults, keep back also thy servant from presumptuous sin." If we fail to see our secret faults, we may have the presumption to believe ourselves perfect, but in view of the flaws and faults so apparent to others, the claim of perfection or entire sanctification is generally pitiable. A Christian who might be honored and respected if he takes his place in humility, and leaves it to others to judge of his attainments by his fruit, will be ridiculous when he makes pretention to a perfection the imperfection of which is apparent to all. Many who claim that they have been converted twice over, may be glad if they can make outsiders believe they have been converted once for good.

Yet there are higher degrees of Christian experience and greater excellencies of character than the lowest compatible with a state of grace. The heights and depths of the possibilities of character and of Christian attainments reach into the infinite, and are lost to view from earthly sight. No doubt Christians have sometimes had wonderful revelations of these possibilities, and their testimony to a sudden or great enlargement may well be believed, for the process of sanctification is not smooth and even through life; sometimes a crisis will occur when our powers are stirred to the utmost, a great trial to be endured, a severe conflict of temptation to be overcome, or a great work to be accomplished; when one comes out victorious from such a conflict, then there is a sudden and great enlargement which some may have mistaken for the whole of it, but after all it is only a quickening step in the process, the springtime, as it were, in our spiritual de-

velopment, but every wind and every season should help to bring forward the process.

Undoubtedly, perfection even in the absolute sense is set before us in the Bible as the standard after which we must strive, God could do nothing less, and man may do nothing less. The alternative of a perfect standard is one that is imperfect, and neither God nor man could set before us an imperfect standard to aim after. We must have a perfect pattern to work after whether or not we can perfectly imitate it. It will not do in this case to say our aims or our striving is fruitless or unreasonable unless perfection can be attained to, for everything does not depend on this definite result. If a soul is converted he is according to the faith of all saved, his salvation is not staked at the perfection he is told to strive for. Moreover his striving and his efforts in the process of his Christian life is not in vain, is not lost, even though he may not attain to absolute or entire sanctification. Every step towards perfection, every struggle for a higher life, is a definite gain. This striving to better ourselves without gaining what is absolute or perfect is natural to our earthly life; who does not strive for perfect health of body, yet a body absolutely perfect in all respects can hardly be hoped for. And so in our struggle for development of mind, we would set before our aim nothing less than a perfect mind, perfectly developed, even though the full attainment would not be within our reach.

For a Christian to speak of entire sanctification can mean nothing less than the perfection of his whole being; his will must already have been entirely sanctified and consecrated in his conversion, if this has not been done, then what is before him is conversion not the end of sanctification. One must surrender his will without re-

serve to God before he is in any sense a child of God or a saved man. Yet, we often find that the perfection which perfectionists are striving for, and which they are content with, is something very imperfect; and what they call entire sanctification is far from being entire. But these terms "perfect" or "entire" should not be used unless the whole was meant, it is idle to use these and then begin to plead for allowances and immunities. Entire sanctification of our whole body, soul and spirit, blameless as the apostle expresses it, means not only that our will should be perfect to serve the Lord, it means that we must be perfect in every detail, our love, faith, hope, patience, and humility must be perfect; every thought, feeling, desire and imagination must be perfect; and, indeed, our judgment must be perfect or it will play havoc with our moral perfection.

The greatest objection to the theory under consideration is that it tends to destroy what those who advance it profess to be particularly anxious to build up, that is, holiness. According to the Bible there are only two classes of people, saints and sinners, converted or unconverted, saved or lost. The perfectionists make three distinct classes, the entirely sanctified constitute a class of superlative saints, something after the manner of the Catholic church, which are especially the embodiment of holiness. Below these there is a class to which salvation is accorded on lower ground, and this ground, being lower than that of the first class, has a tendency to be very low, and we often hear the complacency with which some church members profess to be saved, but lay no claim to sanctification, and evidently consider it a mere adjunct to the Christian life that may be dispensed with without much harm.

Holiness is a necessity for all, not a luxury for a few. "Without holiness no man shall see the Lord." If one is not converted to a holy life and character, what is the effect of his conversion; he was carnal before, if nothing more can be said of him now, then his faith is vain, faith is dead and vain if it is not a means to holiness, and if this has not become the result of it. First a sanctified will without which there is neither true faith nor justification, and afterwards a sanctifying process to which our thoughts, desires and affections, every detail of life and character should be subjected. Holiness, or similarity of character to God, being the end and object of everything in and about religion, associations for the promotion of holiness as a special work outside the church, becomes a misnomer. An association for the promotion of holiness is a church, if a church is not an association for the promotion of holiness it is nothing.

CHAPTER XI.

SUNDAY AND THE ADVENTISTS.

"The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath."—Christ.

The Adventists are a small flock, but exceedingly active. They have imposed their peculiar Sabbath question upon the church, in spite of the utmost reluctance to consider it. If an answer has to be given it is of importance that it should be truthful. They have sprung their question upon the church on many occasions, when those that should give an answer have been unprepared or misinformed, and the answer has been such as has left the advantage of truth and correctness with the Adventists.

If intimations of the change are found in the New Testament, they would amount to scriptural proof and evidence only as it could be proven that the apostles inaugurated it. Their example or direct teaching would be sufficient, for we believe they had authority in all matters pertaining to the organization of the church together with rules and doctrines for its guidance. But it seems at best doubtful that this can be established. It appears rather that the change began with the usual custom of keeping a holiday in memory of great persons or great events, which finally took the place of the old Sabbath day. Some who have very incoherent ideas

about the relation of law and gospel, new dispensation and old, etc., find an argument in this relation for the change of days, but the supposed relation is fanciful, and the conclusion arbitrary. Others, again, when hard pressed, will plead tradition and church authority with a zeal that would out-catholic the Catholics. How hard it is even for the best of men to be perfectly honest.

It is true that the commandment concerning the Sabbath is not a necessity of our moral nature like the other commandments. We would know it were wrong to steal, murder and commit adultery even if there were no commandments, but we would not know it were wrong to labor on the seventh day without a revelation from the Almighty. But we can understand the reason and importance of the command when given, and in placing it among the moral commandments of the law, God has signified that he holds it equally binding with these. It can not, therefore, have passed away with the types and ordinances connected with the ancient temple service, which had their fulfillment at the coming of Christ, it must remain in force with the moral law of which it is made a part according to the revealed will of God. There were holidays connected with the ancient system of temple service, others than the seventh day Sabbath, these are sometimes referred to in the Old Testament as sabbaths, we must believe St. Paul refers to them in the same way, when he makes mention of holidays and sabbaths that are not binding upon the conscience, and of which he tells his converts that their observance is a matter of no moral significance. Christ and his apostles observed the Sabbath according to the spirit and letter of the commandment, the superfluities and impositions of the Pharisees he denounced as he did

their inventions and misinterpretations of the Scriptures in general.

Perhaps the best defence in favor of the change, if defence is attempted, would be the general object of it—that of honoring Christ, "He that honors the Son, honors the Father also." The Adventists, however, might answer to this, that God has a right to prescribe how he will be honored, and that it is safest to keep within the letter of the law. This certainly would be true if by doing so we can best observe the spirit of the law. When we speak of the spirit of the law, we mean the general intention. Of course this can never be understood without the letter of the law, strictly speaking there is no spirit of the law without the letter. But it is possible to lay peculiar stress upon certain details of the letter of the law and by doing so contradict or violate the general intent of it. Occasions may even arise when it is necessary to infringe upon certain details of the letter in order the better to carry out the intent of the law. An occasion of this kind undoubtedly exists at present with regard to the Sabbath. In order to keep it and make it a general benefit as intended by the commandment, it is above all things necessary that Christians should agree upon one day. It is true, now, more than ever, that "no man liveth to himself"—we are dependent upon each other in nearly every field of effort. The great manufacturing establishments cannot be run unless all, or nearly all, agree to work. If essential disagreement about the day to be kept as Sabbath should exist, then neither of the days disagreed about could be used for work, the consequence probably would be that both would be used, and the Sabbath ruled out altogether. this would be the case unless religious regard for the

Sabbath should become much greater than is now the case among workingmen. The same interdependence exists in the commercial world, and even among farmers, especially in the busiest season, unless all agree to work together there can be no work, and unless all agree to keep Sabbath together, in most cases none would be kept. The Adventists would undoubtedly attempt to brush aside these considerations simply by pointing to the fact that the strict letter requires Saturday. But we should insist upon the whole of the commandment and not that part of it only that pertains to the particular day, and if we have to choose, then we should insist upon the more important part of it. We should persist in inquiring what is the real object of the commandment; is it that of commemorating a certain day, event or person? the answer is, no, even as Christ said "the Sabbath was made for man," for his benefit, no doubt, physically, morally and in every way. The main question therefore, is to secure to man this benefit, if it can better be secured by continuing the accustomed day which nearly all agree to keep then it should be continued. The lesser consideration of a particular day must not be brought into conflict with the higher consideration of securing the benefit intended. As has already been pointed out, this benefit is largely dependent upon an agreement to keep one day, this agreement exists now among Christians excepting a small fraction of a per cent.

To endanger the higher consideration that of the benefit to be secured on account of the lesser consideration, that of a particular day, is not only indefensible on the ground of reason, but it is against certain well-defined and positive rules laid down in the Scriptures. We are not to allow matters of circumstances to defeat a true

or real benefit, the particular day is a circumstance, the benefit of the day is real and true. "For meat destroy not the work of God," says St. Paul; this principle applied to our question would be: for the sake of a circumstance in keeping the Sabbath, destroy not the Sabbath itself and the benefit derived from it.

There is danger indeed that this principle be applied where it does not belong, as it often is, in these days of license and liberalism. It can be applied only to what is circumstantial, not to what has a moral side or character to it. Those who claim liberty or license to indulge in bad habits, in doubtful amusements or associations on the ground of this principle deceive themselves and do not discriminate. There is no excuse in the Word of God or anywhere for anything that may do damage to character and endanger morals, and no one may disclaim censure and judgment upon acts of any moral significance. When St. Paul says: "let us not therefore judge one another" it is not implied that we may dispense with moral considerations in any way, and while doing so claim immunity from the judgment and censure both of God and our fellowmen. Or when he says, "follow after that which make for peace;" it is not implied that truth and righteousness, even in the last degree, may be sacrificed for the sake of peace; we may sacrifice our prejudices, our convenience and self-interests for the sake of peace, but the truth and righteousness of God it is not ours to dispose of on this or any other account. If in keeping Sunday instead of Saturday, we sacrifice a letter of the law, it is not done to appease a clamor, but for the sake of the essential truth of the commandment, and its practical application.

CHAPTER XII.

SOCIOLOGY AND CRIME.

"Woe unto them that call evil good and good evil."—Isaiah.

Modern Sociologists have invented two terms, heredity and environment, around which they have woven a creed that has well nigh revolutionized the thought and and sentiment of the age. It is not, indeed, a new doctrine that birth and surrounding circumstances powerfully influence the individual, but modern science goes farther, it analyzes the human body and fails to discover a soul, but it finds that body, brain and nerve constitute a machine, acted upon by extraneous influence, which produces thought, feeling and action, and the net result we call character, together with what destiny attaches to it. Free moral agency and responsibility are modes of speech. Our volitions are free as the motion of wheels in a clockwork; when we get behind the wheels we find springs and weights, which give them a certain inevitable motion. Punishment is cruel, for man is either the victim or favorite of circumstances.

Modern Sociologists, acting from these premises, cease to appeal to man's power to will or to be, or to attach much praise or blame to his action. Their hope lies in two directions; first, to repair and improve the machine so it will act more harmonious; and secondarily, to control and arrange influences that shall be brought

to bear upon it, so as to produce better thought, feeling and action.

The influence and effect of this modern science of sociology has been felt in the church, even where there has been no deliberate surrender to it. The appeal to man's free moral agency is less unqualified, his responsibility, guilt and liability to punishment, here and hereafter, are brought home with less assurance of certainty. The atonement for sin, connected with these doctrines, naturally share the same fate. The tone assumed towards the unconverted, worldly and wicked, is one of pity towards a helpless victim rather than blame upon willful transgressors, and the remedy is medication of "the old man" rather than death to the body of sin, and a new life regenerated. What has been left of Christianity is the sympathetic beautiful. This is but a small portion of Christianity, and consequently the new departure and liberal theology, which have their root and being in this new science of sociology, can only believe a fractional portion of Christianity. Thence their pitiable attempts to reconcile the irreconcilable, which inevitably ends in a sneer at the Bible. The system of modern sociology and that of the Bible, are as distinct as any two systems that ever confronted each other, and here lies the difficulty; it is not that the Bible has suffered by any discovery of facts, it is the different spirit which can not possibly find itself at home in the Bible.

Yet, the Bible follows for quite a little way alongside this science. It does not deny the influence of environment, and that some of it is in its nature evil. The unfavorable environment is spoken of under three heads; the world, the flesh, and the devil. The felt influence is called trials and temptations. This is all familiar

enough, but no less scientific for that. In regard to heredity and its possible evil effects and tendencies, even modern sociology would not care to go farther than the theological definition of total depravity; nor would they wish to express themselves in stronger language than David, when he said: "I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me." The Bible and science unite in setting forth the possible evil tendencies of heredity and environment, and both in equally strong language. So far they follow along side each other, but here they part. Science says that man must be controlled by his environment. The Bible says that he must control it. The one says he must be made and moulded by inherited evil tendencies, the other says he must resist and overcome them, or be damned if he does not. The Bible does not allow us to believe that the effect of influences and tendencies connected with environment and heredity is identical with coercion. Man's consciousness is evidently on the side of the Bible. He can discern and discriminate between the various influences that effect him. He is conscious of the kind of motives that prompt him. He recognizes his responsibility in the choice he makes, and is conscious of blame, guilt and ill-desert, or the contrary. One is not helpless, excusable or irresponsible, unless it can be proven that he is wholly unable to distinguish between right and wrong, or is impelled by some mechanical necessity to act in a certain way; neither of which is true of any but idiots, whose irresponsibility is recognized everywhere. Being incapable of the nicest distinctions is not fatal to one's effort for improvement; it may reasonably be expected of any one that he shall do right when he perceives what is right, and shun the wrong when he knows it to be

wrong. To one who acts on this principle the horizon would soon widen, and the plan for improvement broaden.

Tendencies and influences inherited or subjected to by surroundings are so balanced with a personal conscious individuality, will power and moral freedom, that while parents and teachers may reasonably hope to effect and influence those to whom they are related, yet a person is not so bound by these influences, but what he may and does in every case assert his individuality and makes a character that is properly his own. This is a matter of consciousness that it would be idle to argue against. And it is easy to see the reasonableness of this law of our nature; it would be a sorry thing if parents had no reasonable hope to be able to influence or affect their children, and it would be equally fatal to the individuality of man if he was wholly unable to resist these influences and create a character and personality of his own. That this balancing could not be so adjusted as to exclude the natural effects of evil is evident, but it is undoubtedly so adjusted as to give man the best possible chance in a world like ours.

The Bible not only holds us responsible and guilty if we yield to evil tendencies and influences, but teaches that man—collectively and individually—is responsible for environment and heredity such as it is, be it good or bad. It has been of our own making from the beginning till now. We have made the world what it is. In some measure the individual is involved in the general doings of the race, and the net result of it up to the time of his existence. God has, and is doing a great deal to make up for this possible disadvantage to the individual. But in a great measure the individual is independent; he not

only has the power to choose, but something to choose between. We are a bundle of tendencies inherited not only from two, perhaps widely different parents, but from a long line of ancestors, these tendencies are mixed in their character, some good, some evil. The influences to which we are exposed by our surroundings are various and scarcely ever wholly bad; it is not true that this environment is already made for us, except perhaps in early childhood when we are least responsible. The greater part of life, man has it largely in his power to create his own environment, or choose between what exists. In the same city are good persons and bad, institutions for the promotion of what is good and likewise for the furtherance of what is evil. Quite often man not only creates the temptations that beset him, but the weakness that yields to them. He goes voluntarily to places that exist for the very purpose of luring astray, and undermines his strength by bad habits, idleness and luxury till he has no power of resistance. In this is involved the law of reflex action, which makes our bad choices doubly dangerous. We make our environment and our environment makes us. We create darkness and the darkness makes us in turn more dark.

But upon the whole, the world is evil, so the Bible teaches. Man is depraved—not totally in the strictest sense, for that is the depravity of devils—but totally in that he is helpless without divine assistance to rise toward God and goodness. But the Bible teaches that God is in the world as a force wholly on the side of righteousness, and wholly on the side of those that would choose righteousness. Man is not unduly handicapped in the strife. The prodigal need but to nourish a heart-desire to return, and straightway the Father is looking out for

him and coming half way to receive him. The way God has revealed himself in the world and made our redemption possible, the way in which he is working among us as an active force to save us, and the way in which he has distinctly expressed his will concerning us. This is all revealed fully and perfectly in the Bible, and as much outside of it as the depravity of man has made possible and practicable. There can be no revelation of God without mediums through which his spirit may work, when these fail or are very imperfect, the revelation must fail, or be incomplete.

In view of the general depravity of the race, any attempt to account for the criminal as a peculiar physiological product, or on any ground outside that of common humanity, becomes superfluous. There are enough evil tendencies in and around us to make a criminal or libertine of every son of Adam, if he allows these tendencies to have their own way with him. On general principles, all the difference between the criminal and those that are not, is the difference in the degree of resistance. The allowance which may be made on account of circumstances which increase temptations and put man at a disadvantage, cannot be put down as a definite quantity. The Scriptures recognizes it as a quantity, but insignificant in comparison with the willfulness of the individual. Man, generally and individually, is spoken of as willfully wicked, responsible for his wickedness and deserving punishment. The scriptural estimate of the allowance that can be made on the one hand, and the blame that must be attached on the other, will probably be borne out by observation and experience. The rich classes who have every opportunity to surround themselves with what is beautiful, ennobling and pure, who can make

their environment all that they choose, are not morally better than the poorer classes; more often they are spoken of as worse, but they are about on one level. The poorer classes produce the burglar, the wealthy classes produce the schemer and manipulator, the bribe-giver and corruptionist. Immorality is at least as common among the rich as among the poor. Generous impulses and natural sympathies are found equally in both classes. Birth may imply a great advantage or disadvantage, and early training is a still greater factor, but it is not uncommon to see men go to the bad, who have had every advantage of birth and early training. On the other hand, we find not a few examples of men rising to honor and moral greatness, who have labored under great disadvantages in these respects. The assertion of the will at critical moments and all through life, has made it possible for "the last to become first and the first last"; to take it for granted that the criminal or flagrantly wicked has become so because he was worse situated than others, is a begging of the question there is no proof for it but rather, the contrary. We do not know in a single case the exact amount of temptation and trial that has been brought to bear upon an individual. To suppose a man who has become a criminal must have had more than his share of temptation is wholly gratuitous. Many of those who remain virtuous and honest may have been exposed to far severer trials than those who have ignominously yielded. The very fact that one has risen to greatness of character and moral strength, is proof that he has been subjected to severe trials and temptations and exerted his individuality in overcoming them, for such greatness is never the result of smooth sailing and favorable circumstances. So far from man being

the inevitable victim of circumstances, it is possible for him to make the worst of circumstances stepping-stones to the highest attainments in character and destiny.

In one particular our sociologists are not consistent, for although they practically acquit the individual of responsibility, they blame society. It is very soothing to refer blame and responsibility to an abstraction that cannot be called to account, for society in this sense is nothing more. If society is indeed responsible and guilty, then the individual is, for what is society but an aggregation of individuals. If an individual is worse than society in general, then he is responsible both for the average wickedness of society and for his own "superfluity of naughtiness." But how much soever the criminal classes may be to blame, it is not questioned that society has a duty towards them. It is a duty imposed without our choice. In some way society has to deal with criminals. How to deal with them is one of the problems of the age. Our dealing with them of recent years has been strongly influenced by the recognized science of sociology, and it has proven a failure. Crimes and criminals have increased enormously, out of proportion to the increase of population, and this in spite of increased educational facilities. The law of Moses and of Christ, which declares the criminals willfully wicked, responsible and deserving of punishment, has been disregarded, and in place thereof, criminals have been made the pets of society. But the law of Moses, in this as well as in other respects, has a way of avenging itself on those who disregard it. Where arguments are of no avail, experience comes to our help, and we are beginning to discover, that in spite of heredity, environment and all the sociological paraphernalia, criminals must be punished or we

will be punished. We must rule them or they will rule us.

But, "reform" is the watchword; the criminal must be reformed. This is very true, but there is no reformatory measure like that of justice. Even the death penalty is reformatory. A murderer is far more likely to reform himself in good earnest when brought face to face with the just penalty of his crime, than when committed to prison, and he will not fare worse in the next world for having paid it. If committed to prison his first and only thought will be how to get out, "hope springs immortal in the human breast," and it has good reason to spring, for very few committed on a life sentence, but what are pardoned out sooner or later. "Whosoever sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed," is the law of God and nature, and when society disregards it it may expect to receive in itself the punishment with interest, of which it acquitted the murder. As a preventive or warning, one execution is more effective than a dozen life sentences. But punishment, although preventive of crime, is not the only preventive; for this reason those are at fault who measure the record of murders by this circumstance alone, where there is no disposition to commit murder, none would be committed whether the penalty is this or that. Education, moral and intellectual, must be combined with strict laws and strict enforcement. But even as an educational measure, justice is of great value. A government expresses its regard or disregard for crime by the punishment meted out, and the fact, either way, impresses itself on the population, and creates or destroys the moral sentiment. Sometimes the tide of corruption and moral depravity has been turned in a nation or age by the strict enforce-

ment of law and justice, in the hands of an efficient and honest government. History furnishes us with such examples.

In adopting reformatory measures for our prisons, we should do well to study those in operation in the world at large. The world may be looked upon as a reformatory, of which we all are inmates. The Almighty has an interest in our reform, and adopts measures to that end. There is something to lure us to a better life, rewards for obedience; but on the other hand, there is strict discipline and enforcement of penalties. To our sentimentalists, the Almighty would not appear as a philanthropist; he does not abolish pain, but depends upon it largely as one of his reformatory measures; pain of hard labor, of discipline, of penalties, for disobedience. Even capital punishment is not abolished: "He that hardened himself is suddenly destroyed and that without remedy." In so far as society is called upon to co-operate with God in this work of reform, it will do well to adopt his measures. The fundamental in all reform is justice. Attempts to reform a prisoner by setting aside justice in his case, is like building a house without foundation. No criminal can be reformed till he has got the idea of justice into his head and heart, and adopted it as the fundamental in his life and character.

Next in order as a reformatory measure is strict discipline. Till one has learned thoroughly the lesson that his inclinations, likes and dislikes are not to be the motive force in his life, he cannot possibly stand alone and take care of himself. In this is included the discipline of honest and regular work, this is necessary not only as

a corrective, but as a means of living honestly outside the prison.

The general influence of mind and heart may be reformatory. But this is an element that can hardly be bargained for in public institutions, it is too subtile to weigh or balance. Call it love, and you may have a sentiment void of moral qualities, or you may have the sum total of all moral qualities. Call it sympathy, and the same wide difference may exist. Whether love and sympathy is effective depend altogether on what it is in man. A sympathy that can easily feel for the criminal because it has no feeling about his crime, will only create or strengthen self-sympathy in the criminal, and harden him against reformation, so much the more as it is sure to adopt false methods. Godly sympathy is a standing rebuke against sin and selfishness, while recognizing the possibilities of good there may be in a man, and appeals to it to cultivate and strengthen it. Unless love of righteousness and truth predominate, and a desire to make the transgressor righteous and true is uppermost, unless, in short, there is divine power mixed with the sympathy, it is useless as a reformatory measure.

Modern sociology has produced a crop of sentimentalists, which directly or indirectly, tends to defeat justice and increase crime. They are ever on the lookout for a chance to prove their moral imbecility. In harmony with their science, they believe there is only one evil, that of pain; and one faculty that ought to be exercised, that of pity. If a murdered person is out of the way, and his suffering past, then there is no more any feeling for him, all their tender sympathies are centered on the murderer, who is in danger of becoming a victim of the law. The fact that he may suffer is sufficient cause for

all that is in them to rise in his behalf. The question of right and wrong, guilt or innocence, or even public safety, is not a consideration. The only question is how to prevent a certain amount of pain. This sentiment, combined with the selfish interest of lawyers in trials of criminals has made the work of justice laborious, difficult and very expensive. No wonder that in the poorer sections of the South and West, a kind of home-made justice is resorted to when that furnished by the lawyers becomes too expensive to be afforded or too uncertain to be depended upon. It is easy to point out the evil results of such irregularities, but justice defeated or denied will lead to evil results in some form or other.

Society in a rude and uncultured state, is apt to err on the side of harshness and undue severity. But in highly civilized and cultured communities, a state of mind and feeling is easy developed that makes it much harder to do the stern work of justice, and take up arms against crime, than to preserve the placid and unruffled temper and quiet unconcern. Selfishness becomes of the passive type, that is always characteristic of a luxurious and effeminate people. Patience, forbearance, mercy and forgiveness become comparatively easy, they require only a passive state of mind and placid temperament, one does not need to rise from an easy chair to exercise one and all of them. But whatever calls for strong action, either of mind or body, is at once a hard trial and a disagreeable task. This liberalism and indifference to moral issues, misnamed "charitableness," is only the acute sensitiveness and shrinking from pain or exposure natural to the hot-house plants of an effeminate civilization. It has no moral quality. When a population reaches this state, it is easily subjugated by foreign foes, and is at the mercy

of the criminal classes within itself, if it does not suddenly dissolve into chaos by the weight of its own corruption. "The goodness of God leaded, or tended, to repentance," or was meant for that purpose, it is written. Patience, forbearance, forgiveness and mercy, in order to be justifiable must be active, looking, hoping and working for some good end. They are only so many excuses for indolence and cowardice if no moral good is actually looked and hoped for in their exercise. "Righteousness and judgment are the habitation of his throne" they are the foundation of all order, and mercy itself must be built upon this foundation to be well founded, it must be calculated to promote righteousness. In the divine plan, mercy is only another way of gaining the ends of justice, and in this is justified.

The spirit of liberalism, of moral indolence and cowardice, begets a narrowness of view which, while boasting of breadth and liberality, is the most pitiable of all narrowness. It is generally centered around some pet theory, and its advocates are blind to everything beyond and above it. A few passages of Scripture that seemingly favor their liberalism and sentimentality are selected and insisted upon as representing the spirit and teaching of Christ. But as the soul of nature and man is complex and vast so the spirit of Christ, as exhibited in the New Testament, is even more so. The spirit of Christ is represented in his terrible denunciations of sin; his day of judgment, his agony in the garden, his death on the cross, as much as in the passages of the sermon on the mount that speaks of love and forgiveness. They would confine the spirit of Christ to their own little artificial flower garden, carefully cultivated, but it is broad as the wide landscape and vast as the heavens. It is not mere-

ly a flower garden or a lovely dale, it is the expanse of the ocean, the rocky heights, the snowy range of mountains, it is every feeling and faculty of God and man brought into the service of righteousness.

CHAPTER XIII.

MODESTY.

"First pure then peaceful."—James.

It is doubtful whether the appreciation of virtue is greater now than the average, since our first parents emerged from the garden of Eden, clothed with the garments made for them by the Almighty in place of the fig-leaf covering, with which they had attempted to hide their shame. There have been changes from the better to the worse, and from the worse to the better, in every country and clime. In one particular, we are ahead of our fore-fathers some centuries ago; we do not like the rank and silly aspect of vice. Even Shakespeare tastes so strongly of the unwholesomeness of his age as to be often offensive, and ought to be purged from all obscenity. But it does not follow that because our age dislikes the rank and silly show of indecency, that it is therefore more virtuous; sometimes the very consciousness of the prevalence of the foul fire damp of lust makes us the more sensitive to anything that might cause an explosion. In earlier ages there was less sensitiveness about this subject, and seemingly less need of. The very Scriptures bear witness to this. Even the free expression of the innocent in the joy of love, as in the song of Solomon, would not now be considered good taste. But it would be rash to take

credit to ourselves on this account; it rather shows that the imagination is now so besotted as to be apt to turn everything to an evil use. Sometimes the fastidiousness of our age goes so far as to become guilty silence, in which there is neither virtue nor strength, but only the evidence of vitiated taste and overwrought sensitiveness. The seventh commandment is passed over in silence as though we had a dispensation from the Almighty to do so. We are afraid even of applying the cure, because in doing so we must necessarily reveal the disease.

The Bible, as well as other information, bears witness to the fact, that from the earliest age man has regarded sexual crimes with as much disfavor as we do to day. Adultery and prostitution were generally considered capital crimes among the ancients, and liable to the death penalty. They could appreciate an example like that of Joseph in Potiphar's house as much as we of to-day. Our ancestors on the shores of the Baltic were so much noted for domestic virtue that their descendants would find them worthy of imitation. Tacitus, the Roman historian, gives them this testimony: "No one there laughs at vice, nor is to seduce and to be seduced called the fashion. Happy those states in which only virgins marry, and where the vow and heart of the bride go together. Infidelity is very rare among them." Throughout the Scriptures, an adulterous woman is made the synonym of what is vilest and worst, and used persistently to illustrate the infidelity of God's people towards him, as though no worse figure was obtainable. Christ in his Sermon on the Mount does not pass by the seventh commandment, but shows how it must be applied to the thoughts and intents of the heart, as well as

to the acts: "Ye have heard it was said by them of old time, thou shalt not commit adultery, but I say unto you that whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart. And if thy right eye offend thee (by the lustful glance) pluck it out and cast it from thee. And if thy right hand offend thee (by the guilty touch) cut it off and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell."

In the decalogue and throughout the Scriptures, sexual sins are placed side by side with crimes of violence, such as theft and murder; some would ask for a wide distinction in their behalf, as mere sins of indulgence; but all sins may be looked upon in this aspect, for sin is never committed except to indulge some passion or desire. Theft and murder may have an aspect of brutality that strikes us more forcibly, but the consequences of sexual sins are even worse in their general effect. It is displeasing, therefore, to the Creator, not as a mere weakness, but as a crime of far-reaching consequences; what can be more grievous in the sight of God than to foul and poison the fountain of life for future generations. In the light of Christianity and general belief in the soul's immortality, would it seem strange if the Creator should look upon the fact of bringing a being into this world as of as much consequence as that of dispatching one out of it, and condemn the heedless actions equally in both cases; or that he should fence about this act of propagation with the strictest laws, and ascribe to their violation the most awful penalties. Whatever weakens the feeling of responsibility, whatever lowers it to an act of levity, a matter of lust and concupiscence,

a mere incident in the gratification of the passions, must be in the highest degree displeasing to the Creator. Evidently God meant that the propagation of the human species, should only be in connection with the highest reason and holiest desires, as the Scriptures said: "that he might seek a godly seed." Whatever violates this has its punishment both in time and eternity; both in the spirit and body of the transgressor.

It is well said by St. Paul that sexual sins differ from others in that they destroy both body and soul. There is nothing like the sin of immorality to bring about that physical and moral degeneration that makes a people utterly unfit for anything noble, and wars against their very existence. For sexual crimes, when generally practiced, quickly destroy the reproductive power, children become scarce, and those that are born are feeble and effeminate, unfit for the stern duties of life. Thus the ancient Roman people came at last to a pass, where luxury and vice had utterly unnerved them; they had to depend on mercenaries for their defense, and were easily overpowered by the northern tribes, who combined domestic virtue with warlike qualities. This teaches how a people may deteriorate, for who would suppose that the Romans of later times, were descendants of those in whom reigned the spirit of Virginia and Lucrece. The ancient Greek civilization represents as striking an example: their cultured and intelligent classes, the boast of the nation, became tainted with nameless vices that made them barren and childless, and the state became dependant upon the poor and ignorant for a posterity to make up the population:

Of the causes that lead to immorality and vice, we mark the following:

1. Forced development that leads to early maturity.

2. Lack of moral and religious training.

3. Decay of orthodoxy and corresponding tendency to liberalism.

4. Amusements, the essence of which is sexual excitement.

5. Lack of parental care and social restraint.

The result of forced development is very similar in plants and animals. Compare the flower that grows in hard ground, with little of moisture and shade, a stunted growth, quickly accomplished, early developed flower, small and sickly, that quickly fades. On the other hand, if the ground is fertile, with plenty of moisture, the plant will grow much longer, the stem will be firm and strong, the leaves large and shady, before the flower, coy and lovely, appears among the dark green leaves, its beauty and glory retained till late in the season. Girls are supposed to be the flowers of humanity, and anyone can observe the analogy with regard to growth and development.

The causes of forced development and early puberty may be enumerated as follows: (1) Inherent low vitality. (2) Highly condensed food that does not distend and develop the digestive organs and consequently not the rest of the body. (3) Idleness, to deprive the young of useful occupation is to abandon them to the devil. (4) Too much study, too much mental application, and not enough out-of-doors exercise. (5) Whatever unduly excites the nervous system, novel-reading, intermingling of the sexes, sexual excitement under the guise of amusements. (6) Tight dresses, the corset—principal inven-

tion of the devil for the deterioration of the human race.

The danger that lies in a too early development of the passions, has its cause in the fact, that their strength is developed before there is corresponding intelligence, character and will-power to direct and control. Girls are in more danger of seduction between the ages of thirteen and sixteen than at any other. Brothels are almost wholly recruited by girls of this age. They are often subjected to all the impulses of a violent passion, but do not have the sense and womanly dignity of later years to restrain and warn. Parents who allow girls of this age to run at large among the young men, know but little or care less. During the skating ring craze, the seduction of such girls became so notorious, that the legislatures of several states considered measures to prevent their presence unattended by responsible persons.

The importance of childhood and youth as the age for the moulding of character is recognized by all. The exercise of the mere intellectual is detrimental and abusive at any age, but it is more so in childhood and youth; then is the very age when heart and soul respond best to moral impressions, and to the high and noble aspirations comprehended in religious training. Chords of love, hope, faith and sympathy, if not awakened in childhood or youth may lie dormant forever, and finally lose all power to respond. A system of training for children and youth that treats them as mere intellectual machines to work out certain results in arithmetic and grammar is abusive and unnatural in the extreme. Nowadays it is more than ever superfluous as well as injurious that the child's mind should be crammed with a vast amount

of information in school years, having learned to read and write, he has the key to all knowledge, for all knowledge is now contained in books, and if the child has sufficient instruction in school to arouse his curiosity, he may at his leisure through life pursue the studies that have special interest for him, independent of schools and teachers. With the forming of character and laying the foundation of morals, it is different; if this is done wrong or neglected in childhood, character will be deformed and the moral nature dwarfed through life. To form character and lay the foundation of morals, should therefore be our principal effort in behalf of children and youth.

It need not be said that this order is reversed in our public schools. But it is supposed that the church and the home take care of the religious and moral training of the child. Suppose they do not, more than half of our population belong to no church and have no moral or religious instruction either in church or at home. The growing youth of this large class is wholly dependent for their knowledge of right and wrong, and of moral distinctions in general, on what little they may pick up accidentally. Yet the state holds them responsible for their moral conduct, it holds them responsible for duties that it does not teach them. It demands that their conduct shall be in harmony with certain moral laws and standards, but does not teach them what they are. Some responsibility must no doubt be left to the individual and to parents, but if the state considers it her duty to reform the youth after he has become vicious, it would seem much more a duty to form him so he shall not become vicious.

Even that portion of our population which belongs

to some church, has no adequate moral and religious instruction for their young. The Sunday school is the only institution for this purpose and the children may or may not attend. If they do, a single hour in a whole week is quite insufficient to meet the demand for moral and religious instruction, and in very few, even of religious families, is this supplemented by any effort at home. The sum of it is, that half the population has no moral training, and the other half is insufficiently provided. That half outside the church is losing what moral and religious ideas tradition and past training had left them, and we have a generation of youths growing up nearly void of such ideas. We perceive it in an air of heathenism, a moral blank, that stares forth menacingly in all their action.

Even as an intellectual stimulus there is nothing like moral and religious training rightly comprehended. Dry rules of arithmetic and grammar are but as dead rubbish compared with the living seed of the Word of God. The former is soon forgotten, but the latter will remain a living power in the soul forever. Religious training will not only teach moral distinctions but will furnish the needed restraints upon the passions without which it is a miracle if disaster does not result. The emotional predominates in the child, as it does indeed in the masses of grown people, religion alone can enlarge, discipline and purify the emotions. Even if some children are capable of no deep religious impression, they will not fail to comprehend the moral side of religion, the distinction between right and wrong. They will understand the difference between heaven and hell, the judgment will be present with them in making their choices, they will be made

acquainted with the nature and consequences of sin and crime.

The problem of religious instruction in public schools has been solved in other countries of mixed population in one way or another. The Bible, non-sectarian and fundamental, without a commentary on the text, is a solution to which there can be no rational objection. It would furnish a basis, and denominations might build upon it according to their peculiarities. The state has some right in the way of having children brought up so they shall not become a danger and damage to the community, which those who wish to be or become citizens are bound to respect, objections should be overruled on this ground. The principle of civil and religious liberty does not require a policy that will please everybody, this at best would be impossible. It requires a policy that will leave no ground for just complaint. Our government, informed by public opinion, and guided by its own wisdom must decide what constitutes a just complaint.

Modern liberalism in harmony with modern sociology, directly and indirectly, tend to increase crime, both of violence and against virtue. Whatever difference there may be about details or minor matters, the sum total of the tendency is to belittle sin and make it less alarming for the sinner. Their mood is especially soft towards sexual crimes. To speak of a fallen or faithless woman in their presence as wicked would be an offence, she is simply unfortunate. Unfortunately for their opinion, the Bible does not agree with them, it makes no difference between man and woman; it makes their responsibility the same and their damnation the same. Rather strange, it is generally those who most persistently clam-

or for woman's right who thus insist on putting her on a lower level in regard to responsibility. This implies an inferiority which Christianity does not ascribe to her.

It is common to complain of the injustice done fallen women in excluding them from society, while men equally guilty are admitted as though nothing was the matter. But what is the object of this? Is it that immoral women and men should be accepted as though their way of life was not to be criticised? or is it meant that they should equally be excluded? The reason why fallen women are excluded is not because society hates this sin in a woman more than in a man, but because men are so constituted that they do not want to marry an impure woman. They do not hate her, but at the same time they do not desire her. There is a place for immoral men in society because women are perfectly willing to marry them. Marriage is the focal point around which social life revolves, it all depends on how this is regarded, if women felt towards men of this sort as men feel towards that class of women, they would as certainly be excluded. It is probably a mistake to suppose that women hate their erring sisters on account of the sin which they look upon with so little disfavor in men. Their supposed hatred may be set down as a specie of jealousy.

There has been much wrangling, in and outside the church, about amusements. Liberals have demanded, what is the harm in certain kinds of amusements, and Christians have scarcely been able to tell, while knowing all the time that there was harm. The reason for this has been the want of a general test easily applied to all amusements of this class. It should be taken for granted that whatever amuses by passional excitement or exhilara-

tion, in any degree, is sin. It is sin to play with the fires of passion for our amusement. The appeals to the passions that excite may be caused by lewd exhibitions, as in a theatre, otherwise by personal contact between the sexes as in dancing. As the contact increases in familiarity, so the excitement increases, and in like degree the amusement, but in any degree this kind of amusement is sin, and the condemnation of it is implied in the Savior's exposition of the seventh commandment in his sermon on the mount. In modern dancing, with intermingling of the sexes, it is the contact between the sexes, the familiarities allowed, the sexual excitement that makes it an attraction. Everything in the ballroom is calculated for this effect—the voluptuous music, the ecstatic whirl, the decollete dress, the liberties allowed. In worldly-minded and carnal people, the love of this kind of amusement is so strong that when one avenue is closed to them they will open another. Thus, while in some churches dancing has become unpopular, kissing and other kinds of games have been introduced; these are worse than some dances. It would not be too much to demand of a girl that she should have more sense of modesty and delicacy of feeling than to allow herself to be caught, handled, fondled and kissed by everybody as is done in these games. The fellow who broke off an engagement with a girl who had played the babe to be kissed at a church fair, was right; the woman who will prostitute her lips or even her cheeks to promiscuous kissing, would likely prostitute the rest of her body if temptation and occasion should arise.

"Take it thou—finding pure, from all those years
The kiss my mother left there when she died."

Thus, Elizabeth Browning in the song of her love.

A girl might well blush to look her lover in the face if she were unable to say as much.

Boisterous and frivolous mirth cannot be indulged in on the part of a Christian without loss of character and self-respect, it is wholly opposed to a godly life. Many professed Christians who are ignorant of true Christian joy, and whose life and character are not matters of rejoicing, assume the worldly counterfeit and appear with an air of flippancy. Unsanctified joy or sorrow is alike bad, but unsanctified joy in the form of levity on the part of a professed Christian is more disgusting, forasmuch as sorrow is more consistent with his case.

All the States have enacted laws for the protection of young girls, the object of which is to prevent the seducer from taking undue advantage of youth and inexperience. The laws, whatever their effect or effectiveness, embody the sentiment that the young ought and should have protection. But if they are entitled to protection from the state how much more from their parents and guardians. We complain, and with reason, that some of the laws are shamefully inadequate; but many who subscribe to this opinion are much more lax in the care of their own girls than the laws of which they complain. They allow them to be exposed freely to the seducer, and more to play the seducer. Very young girls are dressed out in gaudy attire, and skillful in all the arts of flirtation, they are allowed to mingle freely with the young men, go out with them alone by day and night. They seduce and are seduced. A law that would put the whole blame upon one party to the crime would be quite unjust. Young men are temptable and fallable as well as girls, and ought to have protection against the art of seduction. We may put it

down as a rule that those who are foolish enough to expose themselves to temptation are weak enough to fall, and probably do in most cases. "Lead us not into temptation," why not, rather, help us to resist temptation; no doubt if the temptation can't be avoided it is nobler to have resisted. But in most cases victory is only gained by foresight and the very fact of one snuffing round the snares of the devil shows a degree of affinity, and one has already been in a measure overcome when he has yielded to the temptation of exposing himself to temptation needlessly. Job understood this three thousand years ago when he said "I made a covenant with mine eyes," and the Savior "Watch and pray lest ye enter into temptation."

The extreme individualism of the sexes, both in men and women, has made the legal and binding union of marriage more difficult and less frequent. The last census of this country revealed some three millions of bachelors over thirty years of age, and, of course, a corresponding number of unmarried women. The number is startling and suggestive, so much the more as those who thus refuse or are slow to contribute anything towards the future of society are not always, nor even generally, of the poorer and worse classes. The churches have taken up the cause, but often with more zeal than knowledge. Some of them are little more than social clubs with the principal aim in view of "getting the young acquainted". Wonderful ingenuity is exerted, and wonderful entertainments invented for the purpose of giving the young opportunities for flirtation, for this is considered the great promoter of union and harmony. But flirtation, so much depended upon, is not conducive to marriage, it tends to destroy the confidence which is essential to love and friend-

ship. The churches could serve the cause of matchmaking in no better way than to remedy the defects in character, and inspire qualities, both in boys and girls, that will make them mutually attractive, and leave ground for esteem and admiration. This done, the natural law of attraction or gravitation may be depended on to bring them together, this it may safely, if simplicity is allowed to rule and the intricacies of flirtation avoided. Courtship among us is too much game and not enough common sense; if the churches should establish matrimonal bureaus in their connection, and run them on common sense principles, it would be much more effective and honorable than flirtation and coquetry, which involves a great waste of thought, feeling and effort that might be put to better use. The practical young men of our age have not much mind for the intrigues and intricacies of rivalries, some of them are too sensitive to attempt it at all; they desire above all things a woman whose character inspires confidence, and who has practical knowledge of her duties. Every honorable man is an Othello, he hates promiscuity, the girl who bestows her fond looks and bewitching smiles on everybody, instead of reserving them for her true lover, is not desired. Her yea should be yea and nay—nay in looks and manners as well as in words.

Flirtation, moreover, is damaging to the moral character. It is generally attended with familiarities, the natural consummation of which is the capital crime against virtue, even as envy and hate has its natural consummation in the capital crime against life. And our Savior teaches that the different stages of feeling and desire that lead up to the consummation in both cases, partake of the crime to which it tends, and hell fire is threatened as the punishment in both. But it is generally excused on the ground

that the young must get acquainted before, in order to marry. That this is strictly necessary is doubtful, for more than half the nations of the world do not allow it in any manner on account of the risk involved, and marriage is said to be fully as much of a success among them as among us. But suppose acquaintance is necessary, there is scarcely a more doubtful way of gaining it than by flirtation and familiarities. Contact between the young of both sexes blinds rather than informs. Scarcely a girl in a dozen but what will be deceived by a well-informed scamp, into believing him to be a pattern of excellence, if he has the advantage of private meetings and personal contact; and it is equally true that a man may be ensnared and held by a woman if she has like advantages, even against his better judgment, As for the affinity of a true love it generally reveals itself at sight, the interest developed by contact and familiarities is something different. What is needed for safety on both sides is a knowledge of character, it is best known by habits and ways of everyday life, and the knowledge is generally best gained from disinterested persons.

Flirtation not only results in damage to character, but it is the cause, directly or indirectly, of about half the murders and suicides committed. Flirtation encourages rivalries, and rivalries necessarily end in disappointment somewhere, and disappointment of this kind is apt to upset weakminded persons; the result is murder or suicide. This might largely be prevented by an honest, straightforward course. Rivalries in love affairs are a characteristic of the lower animals; cats and dogs fight about a mate, and among the animals, the female has no choice, but to go with the physically stronger. Among men she may choose, and this ought to settle the ques-

tion. But perhaps she is in no hurry to assume her prerogative. The offering of admiration, from competing rivals upon the altar of her vanity, is too sweet to be refused, and she is rather apt to encourage than to put an end to the contest. It is known, and we are freely told for our benefit, that women love a lover that has cheek and courage; that is, one who willingly and freely exposes himself to humiliation and the wounding of his feelings, perhaps to final disappointment and the consciousness that he has made an ass of himself; who is willing to jostle and scramble with a crowd for coveted favors. But men of sense and noble sentiment are apt to be rather backward in this game; such men are sure to have pride, and they will not freely expose themselves to humiliation and the wounding of their feelings. Women are apt to be superficial in judging of the sentiment of such, and blunder in making demonstration the test or measure, for this is rather a matter of temperament than of strength or intensity. They congratulate themselves if the fellow loses his head on their account, but those that grow blind and frantic in their devotion, are men with small hearts and diminutive brains, but with an abnormally developed animalism. A man of sense is quite apt to judge of his intended with the precision of one who sees everything clearly; when judgment is well developed, feeling will not blind it. Those that lose their heads are such as have not much head to lose.

Men and women who contemplate marriage, are alike desirous that the love that inspires their union should be constant and enduring, and they hope to have a guarantee to this effect in its intensity. But, as a general thing it is the carnal passion that is appealed to in order to create this intensity. Women are the most apt

to err in this respect. In their passive way of wooing, the appeal is generally to man's passion rather than to his love for the noble, the true and worthy. As for instance, the decollete dress, what is it but a frank appeal to the animalism of the other sex. But perhaps it will be answered that woman must appeal to man as he is, and if the animal is nearly all that there is of him, what is she to do? Of course, if this be the case, the objection disappears and we leave it. But if a woman gains a husband by the tricks of the harlot, can she complain if she is looked upon in this light only, and has little love left her when her beauty and charms have faded. The strength of the animal passion is no guarantee that love will last; extravagant promises and assurances made on this ground, before marriage, are not generally kept. There is no guaranty except in character. If men or women consider themselves mere creatures of feeling, and predestinated to yield to any impressions made upon them, then occasion for a change of feeling is apt to occur any time, before or after marriage. The only guaranty is in the character and principles that believe in the "shall" and "shall not" of Scripture, and in their own ability to obey. The sense of honor and duty that forbids the roving eye and the fitful imagination; that does not dwell upon the thought of evil, but guards against the first approaches of a guilty passion, that know and believe themselves capable of preventing in themselves any caprice of feeling, and fulfill the divine requirement of constancy in love on the part of wife and husband.

Marriage used to be looked upon more as a settlement than a conquest or a bit of romance, and it used to be looked for with more certainty than now-a-days. A girl would prepare herself in a business-like manner for

what was looked upon as a matter of course. Now it is looked upon as a mere chance, girls learn trades and prepare to be self-supporting. If this is necessary it is nevertheless unfortunate. It is generally deplored mostly on account of interference with the chances of young men to earn a living and establish a home, and probably it does, so much the more as they are nothing too well prepared for the competition. But the damage is as great in creating a distaste and disability on the part of the girls for the duties of housekeeper and homemaker. A committee of women lately investigating the tenement districts of New York City reported that the homes appeared shabby and ill-kept, the cooking was half waste, half dyspepsia, and that a great deal of the drunkenness and brutality of the men was caused by it. The wives freely admitted that they knew nothing about housekeeping; the early years of their girlhood had been divided between books and frivolities, later on the store or the factory had claimed them. It is a fault in girls to neglect learning the duties that naturally belong to them on any account. All, or nearly all, hope for a home of their own; they should be prepared to assume the duties that belong to a home. Whatever they may or may not learn, they should never fail to learn housekeeping and cooking, and have a practical knowledge of all the laws of economy and industry pertaining to the making of a home. Millionaries are not numerous enough for girls in general to depend upon for husbands; the great mass of men depend upon labor for a support, and they cannot support a home unless the woman is capable and efficient as a helpmeet.

CHAPTER XIV.

WOMAN'S SUFFRAGE.

"They shall be one."—(Genesis-Christ.)

The agitation for woman's suffrage is one of the sentimental vagaries of the age. The sentiment, as generally expressed by men, is tipsy, it savors of the carnal nature, rather than of a moral conviction. Otherwise it is a symptom of a social disease, due to extreme individualism, and complicated with other disorders that make women failures within their natural sphere of activity and influence, for which reason they discontentedly seek for other worlds to conquer.

The rights and wrongs of women hardly enter into the question, no doubt they have had their share of both in times past, and so have men. Which of the sexes has been most tyrannized over, it might be hard to determine. No doubt men have tyrannized over women, and so likewise have women over men; what evil passions have they aroused? What wars have they instigated, how men have toiled and quarreled, fought, bled and died for women. Laws and customs of the past have not been perfect, but upon the whole they have had their origin in the fundamental distinction of the sexes; the influence of one sex may have fairly counterbalanced the superior strength of the other, and about evenly divided the joys and sorrows of life. In no instance do we find

the women of the past complain of their lot as a whole, there is scarcely any need of the commiseration bestowed upon them on this ground. Of course, they have suffered in common with humanity, but have also fairly been partakers of the advantages of the times in which they lived. The virtuous woman has been the song and praise of all ages, and the wise among them have not failed of recognition. We find examples of this in the history of all nations; taking the more familiar instances of Bible history, we find women in the earliest ages up to the standard of the times, well informed and capable, having due honor bestowed upon them, and happy in their homes. Women superior in wisdom have been recognized even as leaders, but such cases are exceptional, simply showing that there was no prejudice against them, but also suggesting that man is the rule in this capacity. She appears to most advantage in her home, and the Bible gives us pictures of many such; her principal work is within the family circle, and the honor most coveted, that of being "a happy mother of children."

We have before us in Proverbs the picture of a woman in the sphere of her activity, three thousand years ago. She is not a modern-reading machine, which devours all knowledge, and yet does not know her business, on the contrary, she understands it thoroughly. At the beginning and the end of the picture, we find "virtue" and "the fear of the Lord"; these are fundamental in her character. By virtue we may understand general excellence, but chastity and womanly honor was always first thought of by the ancients in considering the excellencies of a woman. All through her life we find diligence and industry; these ought to be the warp and

woof in every life; there can be neither virtue nor the fear of God without it. Yet the picture given of her diligence and industry is not that of a drudge, nothing is farther from it. Her work is not done complainingly, languidly or slavishly; it is the free and spontaneous activity of a healthy mind and body, such as cannot help being active and rejoice in their activity. "Strength and honor is her clothing and she rejoiced in time to come." She may have had less book-learning than now-a-days, but she had more wisdom, and she could give expression to it. "She opened her mouth with wisdom, and on her tongue is the law of kindness." Kind and sympathetic, yet strong and active, a many-sided and fully developed human being. She is the mother of joyous and obedient children, who do her reverence, "they rise up and call her blessed." "Her husband also, and he praised her," which proves that the inclination on the one hand, or the occasion on the other, must have been greater than now-a-days. "She looked well to her household," but her husband looked after politics, "He sitteth in the gates of the elders." The Bible knows where to draw the line every time, there is a divine hand holding the balance between the true and the false throughout the scriptures. For our part we will let evolution evolve, and stand by the ideal of three thousand years ago, but where, except in the Bible, could we find this.

When the Creator introduced man and woman into this world he placed them in their home in the garden of Eden and said: "they shall be one." After sin had entered, a few additional directions or commands became necessary; their life must now be one of labor, of this is allotted to Adam the work in the field, to the woman

is given the care of children. Moreover, with the introduction of sin came the possibility of discord, the need of rule and authority, this is given to Adam. Rule or authority implies lack of harmony and sympathy, where these are perfect there is little or no need of the assertion of this authority, and it is conspicuously absent from the picture of "the excellent woman," but as far as there is need of it, it was given to the man as the head of the family.

When God said of man and woman "they shall be one," it is implied that their interests are one and, in the main, the same may be said of their character. The two sexes are so intertwined in their relations that they must necessarily rise or fall together. Characteristics indeed, differ, and each sex may have weaknesses peculiarly its own. When the ancients would represent violence in their works of art, they did so in the shape of a man; when they would represent frivolity and vanity they did it in the shape of a woman. That men should be more given to crimes of violence, and consequently fill our prisons to a greater extent than women is natural; their opportunities, temptations and natural capacity for these kinds of crimes are greater, but it is but a small part of the sins of the race that are represented in this. As a matter of compliment or sentiment, we may be willing to call women angels, but if advantage is taken of our weakness in this respect, and claims made of superiority, and for radical changes based upon it, then we have to come down to the plain truth, and tell them, that after all they are not angels, but part and parcel of the common humanity, and that attempts to take too much upon themselves are more apt to end in making them less of angels than they are. The sexes have pe-

culiarities on which depends mutual admiration and respect; they can only retain their advantages by developing their strong points; a masculine woman is not admired any more than a feminine man.

Character cannot be weighed with a precision that would enable us in all cases to decide where the preponderance of virtue and excellence belong. Perhaps the best we could do would be to take the world's record of great deeds, great thoughts, and great expressions of sentiment, and ask to which sex they are mainly due. The great battles for liberty and human rights have been fought by men; women have stood nobly by them in the strife, but not as leaders or commanders. The great thoughts of the world have mostly been produced by men, his are the great works of philosophy, science, history, theology, and even of fiction and poetry. Women's place in literature is her place in life; the center is the home or social circle and the radius not very wide; but within her sphere she is the equal of man; it is a matter of limitation not of inferiority. When we come to the world's great expression of sentiment there is more cause for surprise, for this is supposed to be woman's strong point, and no doubt she has done excellently, but the worldrenown song-writers, dramatists, composers of music as well as performers, are all men. Woman is queen of the home; but man has fairly earned his reputation as lord of creation.

Unless woman could establish her claim to superior excellence of character and intelligence,—and it would seem to be hard in view of the facts referred to,—right of suffrage would not constitute a gain to society or the nation. If it be simply allowed she is the equal of

man; her political right would leave the balance and the net result the same, but there would be a loss to make up in the increase of expense, inconvenience, and complexity of elections and political machinery. It is common to point to some great and noble woman, compare her with an offscouring of a man, and demand if it is right the one should vote and the other not. But this is rather a trick than an argument, for it is understood that if women vote they must all have this right, not only the good and excellent, but the ignorant and frivolous; the one class would balance the other as in the case of men, and the result be the same.

Equally shallow is the claim to suffrage on account of certain women not included in families, who, perhaps, live independent and pay their own taxes. Legislation on this subject must run along broad lines, it can not depart from these on account of an old maid here or an old bachlor there. The laws of the nation must recognize the family as fundamental, they have to do with general principles, not with anomalies.

Some who are interested in particular reforms, like that of temperance, look at the question in this light only They hope to secure prohibition laws by women's votes. But we have learned by this time that more is needed for prohibition than mere laws. If such laws are badly enforced where a majority of men have voted for them, what would they avail if they were imposed against the wish of a majority? But aside from this, it is a very narrow thing to look at a question of this radical character in the light of a single issue like that of temperance.

Even if women were the equal or superior to men in character and intelligence, they would not therefore be

able to make laws. Law is not merely the expression of intelligence and character, it is the expression of force, physical force that compels obedience. Advice or a simple statement may have intellectual and moral force if a law has nothing more, it is only so much advice which one may take or not as he pleases. There is no need of women gathering in the halls of legislature to give us advice, they can do that at home, or avail themselves of the press or platform. It is taken for granted that a law is moral and reasonable, but what makes it a law is the force that can meet opposition and put it down. The attitude assumed by the law-making power is the attitude of force. A man alone can assume it, he alone can give expression to brute, physical force, do it gracefully and naturally so as to impress one with the reality of it. A woman assuming this attitude would be ridiculous, she does this when she pretends to the law-making power. There is the beauty of symmetry in the soldier with fixed bayonet charging upon an enemy and even in the burly pugilist drawn up for an encounter. But a woman assuming this attitude would be disgusting. We are therefore opposed to women making laws, because in the nature of things they cannot, they do not possess the physical force without which there can be no laws. We are opposed to it because it is against the divine command, which said of man and woman "they shall be one." What God therefore hath joined together, let not the ballot box put asunder. A plural or divided vote is incompatible with the family relation established by God from the beginning and emphasized by Christ. It would have no meaning, nor any necessity. Heads of families constitute a representative body, even as the legislature itself. The father or husband represents the family when he deposits his

vote, it is the combined influence of all the members that finds expression in his political action. A husband or father has as much at heart, the interests of his wife, mother, daughter and sister, as those of his sons when he votes or otherwise acts in a political capacity, and as a matter of fact this has found expression in his political action whenever altered times and circumstances have revealed the need of new laws, and there is no reason to believe that favor and protection should fail to be secured from those so vitally interested in their welfare. Here as in other matters, sentiment may get the better of wisdom, men occasionally need a little protection as well as women. If the husbands and fathers of this nation should become wholly unfit to represent the family at the polls, it would indicate a moral degeneration that would leave us wholly unfit for a representative goverment, we should in that case have need of neither male nor female suffrage for we would be fit for nothing but the despotism of a czar.

It is not implied in our argument that the heavens would immediately fall if women should vote. There would be an immediate increase in expense, inconvenience and complexity without any corresponding good result. Effects contrary to the best interests of both sexes would appear further on, and it would not be offset by advantages of local or temporary character which might possibly be gained. Their religious, sympathetic nature might in some instances work beneficially, but politicians would soon discover the weak side of this, and learn how to take advantage of it. Men have their failings and weaknesses, but their sense of justice and their judgment is less easy upset than that of the average woman. Women are easier influenced through their feelings and

passions, and in the administration of justice and political affairs this weakness is capable of infinite mischief. Even their religious instincts, the noblest of all emotions, are easily subjected to the service of designing and unscrupulous persons. This probably could not be where religion is built wholly upon the principles of Christ, but weakness on the one hand and knavery on the other, makes it easy. The abject submission of the women to the priests in the Catholic Church is proverbial, much more so than in the case of the men. A priest armed with purgatory, or what is worse, the keys of heaven and hell at his command, is more than a match for the average woman. The intimate relation of the unmarried priest through the confessional and privileges of the home furnishes him with another weapon of advantage, it will scarcely fail to develop a sympathetic quality which adds to his influence; the exact nature and degree of which it is needless to argue, as the only point in view is the fact that it effects the women as it does not the men, and brings their voices and votes under his control. If the women of Catholic countries had sufferage and equal political right with the men, the priests could by their votes overthrow every liberal government in Catholic countries and establish the rack and the stake as in the middle ages. Nothing less than a revolution on the part of the men could prevent it. The priests do not clamor for suffrage in behalf of women, they know they could not rule by their votes as long as the majority of the men are against them. Moreover, they know that the multiplication table counts more than politics and they have no mind to prostitute their women to inferior uses.

The Bible grants to woman as much as it grants to man, she may aspire to the highest heaven and she may fall as

low. Only it does not grant her the power of brute force, nor the right to assume the attitude of it. She is not to "usurp authority." Her power must be that of heart, soul and life, if she cannot gain her ends by these, there is no help for her. God has willed that one half of mankind should be confined to these, that the power of brute force might be abated. As far as woman at any time, or in any case, assumes the prerogative of man, she loses in a corresponding degree the power and influence naturally hers, and the loss to her and the world at large is greater than the gain. Demands for woman's suffrage is the expression of abnormal conditions in society, the cause and effect alike is a contravention of the laws of nature and revelation. We have in mind an old mother who never clamored for right to vote, but she brought up five boys to vote right every time. What did she care about voting while her boys were voting her sentiment straight along. Women are never clamorous for the rights of men unless they have made failure of their own rights. A waning race, that has been selling its birth-right for a mess of pottage, would save itself by putting votes into the hands of the old maids and childless women; it is a poor make-shift, a dependence upon superficialities while neglecting what is fundamental. The foreigners, whose children swarm in our streets, may well afford to let American women "talk politics" while they produce the future generations which will rule and own the country, suffrage or no suffrage. The battle of the future will indeed have to be fought by women, but it will not be done at the polls, but in the homes. It will be the political woman against the domestic woman, and the latter will gain the victory as easy as any victory was ever gained. The future belongs to her, whether she be Jew

or Gentile, Greek or barbarian. Politics and suffrage, refinement and book-learning, indignation and protests will avail nothing whatever against the—multiplication table.

CHAPTER XV.

IMPENDING STRUGGLE OF RACES.

"The place is too strait;—give place to me that I may dwell."-(Esaiah.)

There are questions before the people at present of finance, tariff and the distribution of wealth which create endless discussion, and are the issues in every election. These questions are of importance, they concern the material development of our country, but above them we would place a problem in which is involved the question: what is to be the character of the people, and of the civilization, which in the future is to possess these United States. If it is merely a question how to get the country filled with people, and have its resources developed, there is not much reason for concern; it will come soon enough. The principal European nations are doubling their population every fifty or sixty years, either at home or overflowing abroad. The Chinese and other Asiatic people are capable of like expansion. Transportation is very cheap, and new improvements are in view, if we have not the country filled to its utmost capacity it will not be because the people cannot be forthcoming. It is a more important question how or by whom it is filled; there is neither glory nor safety in numbers, the saddest sight on earth is a seething, struggling mass of corrupt humanity. As the Almighty hid this country for thousands of years till the

reformation and consequent persecution made it desirable that an asylum should be provided for the persecuted, so even now it were better that the material development of the country should stop right here, than that it should serve the purpose of a corrupt and worthless civilization.

At the present rate of increase, the population of the earth will soon be crowding upon the means of sustenance, as indeed they are already in all the elder parts of the world. What is left of the new will soon be filled up, and then will begin a scuffle for room between the different races and nationalities; a battle for bread, not perhaps so much with weapons in hand, as a contest of endurance, a struggle for existence in the true scientific meaning.

To the question: when will this struggle be upon us in good earnest? Some perhaps would answer that it will be when the earth has reached the fullest development of material resources of which it is capable; but this answer would probably be faulty for two reasons: the increase of population may be much faster than the development of resources; and further, the economic conditions are not so in any country as to make possible the development that will support the greatest possible number. In England a landowner may depopulate half a county and turn it into a pleasure park for his own personal enjoyment. In America the centralization of wealth in the hands of a few may check development and interfere with a proper distribution of the means of sustenance. It is calculated that we have room for several times our present population, but the areable land is already occupied; for a dozen years past the waves of western immigration have been surging against the barriers erected

by the arid regions, only to be beaten back by drought, considerable districts having been populated and depopulated in turn. Our cities are generally crowded beyond the possibility of securing employment for all.

We have lately had it explained to us by Prof. Huxley, that the fittest to survive in a struggle for existence under natural conditions and non-interference, may be ethically the worst. This principle would undoubtedly hold good in a struggle between races. If it be merely a question of surviv al in a struggle for existence, those that are willing to adopt themselves to the hardest conditions would probably survive. It is apt to be such a struggle when the population becomes very crowded. Or stated in other words: if it be a mere question of living and propagating, multiplying and filling the earth, brute endurance will count more than intellectual and moral qualities. The only way in which nations possessing these qualities could preserve themselves would be by using their advantages to prevent or avert this kind of a struggle. This, in the United States, can alone be done by preventing those from coming here who are willing to engage in a struggle for a bare existence on the low ground of brute endurance. Most of those that are now coming here are of a class that are thus willing.

Among highly civilized nations, rational considerations will check the growth of population; if times are hard and circumstances unfavorable, there is a decrease in the number of births and marriages. Among rude and barbarous people, internecine feuds and wars will generally suffice to prevent overcrowding. It is among people of stable government and peaceable habits, but not with sufficient intellectual development to overrule

the emotional and passional in their nature, that overcrowding is most likely to occur. Most of the nations of the earth at present are precisely in this state of development. In a struggle for existence on equal ground, these must necessarily live down and crowd out those of a higher civilization, who take counsel with reason, and shrink from the struggle. While these consider the chances for themselves and their possible offspring to get a living, the other class simply multiplies without asking what becomes of their offspring. This, however, does not die, inured to hardship from infancy, they at once act upon the instinct of self-preservation and engage in a fierce struggle for existence.

The supremacy of the most civilized nations, like that of the English, in most parts of the world in some respects tends to aggravate the struggle. Interference of civilization prevents wars and broils which among rude people keep down the population. They also do their utmost to prevent famine, pestilence, infanticide and other means by which nature cuts down mercilessly those that breed recklessly. If those thus spared have the means to emigrate, they will do so, and likely engage their would-be benefactors in a struggle for existence, in which they easily come out ahead. Civilization also will furnish them with the means of emigration. Chinese were never known outside their own country till modern steamships touched their shores, now they are in all parts of the world, and, whatever may be their capacity for fighting, in a struggle of brute endurance they easily get ahead of all competitors. The relation of England to Ireland furnishes us with another illustration. As long as Ireland was left practically to govern itself, internecine feuds and wars kept down the population. When England put a stop

to this, it increased enormously and overflowed into England and the United States. There are now two millions of Irishmen in England, contented with a bare existence and willing to struggle for it; they are crowding Englishmen out, and taking their places. Ireland may in this way conquer England more effectually than England ever conquered Ireland. In France the same is taking place, but here it is Italians that are proving themselves superior in brute endurance. Not long ago there was a battle between French and Italian laborers in the south of France, on the part of Frenchmen it was the blind striking at what they felt to be a foe, but which international laws do not allow to be so regarded. The emigration of foreigners into France is of recent origin but already one and a quarter of a million, mostly Italians, occupy the places of Frenchmen. They are content with lower wages, a bare existence, and a harder struggle for it; they naturally take the place of those that will not struggle on these conditions. It is likewise maintained that in Austria, the German element is losing in strength and influence while the Slav the Czech and the Jew are gaining. In every case it is the highly civilized that is yielding before the less civilized.

In former ages when population got too crowded, they had a simple way of solving the problem. The superfluous portion was armed and sent to seek homes in other lands, which they did by driving out or exterminating the people found in possession, unless they themselves were exterminated in the attempt; in either case the problem was solved for the time being. Now it is done differently; the superfluous portion of a population arm themselves with determination to work for lower wages, and endure more for the sake of existence than the people

of the country they intend to invade. They engage this people in a struggle on the ground of brute endurance, and if their endurance is greater, if they are willing to stand greater hardships, they win in the struggle.

The time must inevitably come when civilized nations will perceive that those who thus come to supersede their home population, to fight them down and crowd them out in a struggle of brute endurance, are no less enemies than if they came with weapons in hand to do the same by force. Unless highly civilized nations perceive this, prepare to bar out the invader, and prevent the barbaric struggle, they must in turn go down, or at least their civilization and native population must disappear.

We are never tired of wondering at the growth of our population, but the real cause for wonder in this respect lies on the other side the Atlantic. The principal European nations, excepting France, have increased nearly as fast as the United States the last twenty years, and this in spite of the fact that in that period of time, ten millions of their population have been shifted from their shores to ours, and some have emigrated elsewhere. Facts observable as well as figures would indicate that the native population of the northern states is about stationary and that the growth of population in these states is almost wholly due to immigrants and their children. There were according to last census twenty-one millions of foreign parentage in the United States. Immigration and natural increase must have added three millions since then, and there are besides three or four millions Irish and German Catholics, of parents born in this country, which have not been assimilated, but must be classed with foreigners. These will then at present number twenty-seven millions. Of these, less than two millions

are in fifteen southern states, containing a population, blacks and whites, of twenty–three millions. The rest of the foreigners, twenty-five millions are in the northern states, which in a population of forty two millions leave a minority of seventeen millions. These, the native Americans, being about stationary while the foreigners are rapidly increasing, it remains a question how long they can impress the increasing foreign population with their race–characteristics and civilization. That they are already failing to do so in many cities and localities is an open secret. Unless immigrants are of a class willing and capable of being "impressed" it is plain that the native element will at a no distant date sink to be a mere tribe in a heterogeneous population consisting of many races, nationalities, languages and religions.

But it is hoped confidently that this foreign population will be assimilated and transformed into Americans in harmony with our civilization and institutions. It is hoped for on the ground that it has been done to a large extent in the past. It has been done because immigrants were nearly all of nationalities kindred to the Anglo-Saxon, but we are facing a new problem now; the greater part of immigrants are now of races not allied to the Anglo-Saxon, and to the question whether they are likely to be assimilated; the experience of the United States gives no answer of a decisive character. But we can get this kind of an answer from other countries where the race problem has been part of their history for centuries, and the answer is uniformily that of the negative. Races have a tendency to remain faithful to their type and prevent amalgamation. The Slav and the German have lived side by side for centuries in Bohemia, Transylvania and other Austrian States, but they are as distinct to-day as

when they first settled. The Celt and the Anglo-Saxon have occupied the small island of Ireland for hundreds of years, but they are as far from being one people as hundreds of years ago. The Anglo-Saxon and the Latin have occupied certain provinces of Canada ever since its discovery, but they are as distinct and far apart as though the channel was between them, indeed much farther; and this may be said likewise of the Anglo-Saxon and the Celt in Ireland, and the German and the Slav in Bohemia. Contiguity has only served to intensify their peculiarities, and make them more hostile towards each other. The relation between them is but an armed truce, prevented from breaking out in open hostilities by imperial power. The examples we have named might easily be multiplied, but they are near on hand and serve the purpose of illustration. That the United States would have better luck with its race problem, there is not the least reason to anticipate. Neither is there any indication of it. Irish and German Catholics that came to this country two or three generations ago are still known as Irish or German Americans; this modification of their Americanism would not exist if they had indeed been assimilated. The alien population is creating distinct quarters in our cities, and exclusive settlements in the country, and the influence that will preserve them so is as strong here as anywhere in the world. And then, where in this country is the imperial or predominating power to overcome and rule these contending races, nationalities and religions? Not in the native element for that is stationary, while the aliens are increasing enormously, both by immigration and reproduction.

Americans have it still in their power to regulate immigration in conformity to their type and in harmony

with their civilization. About one half of the foreigners now in the country are in sympathy with our institutions, and could be depended on to second such an effort; this would leave a sufficient balance of power in their hands to effect a reform. It should be asked critically and positively of every would-be immigrant to this country: 1. "Has he the character that would make him a desirable citizen, and the race affinity that would make assimilation possible? 2. Is he free from prejudices, religious and otherwise, that would leave him subject to foreign influence while in this country?

The test applied would in the first place bar out Asiatics. There should be no distinction made, Chinese are no more impracticable than other Asiatics. Non-interference with Chinese immigration is generally asked for in behalf of missionary efforts. But with unrestricted immigration, China could heathenize America more in one year than we could Christianize China in twenty, and the net result would be a great loss to Christianity. There is every reason to believe that China had as dense a population two or three thousand years ago as it has now, when it numbers about 400,000,000. A healthy, industrious, domestic people like the Chinese, will double their population every fifty years. Suppose this compound doubling of their number had been going on for two or three thousand years, there would have been enough Chinamen alive in the world to-day to cover the United States many times over. The rest of the 800,000,000 of Asiatics are capable of like expansion; with unrestricted immigration, and facilities for coming, they could fill this country with a thousand millions in a hundred years without suffering any decrease at home. Some European nationalities that can just as little be Ameri-

canized are overflowing by the millions every year and want room. Must the United States furnish an asylum for all, as certain philanthropists insist; even by taking thought they cannot add one cubit to the stature of this planet, nor extend the area of the United States indefinitly. The way Chinese and other Asiatics have kept their population stationary for two or three thousand years, when they might have produced enough to people a score of planets, is by the stern law of necessity. They will breed like rabbits, and in good years crowd the country to its utmost capacity; then, when a bad year comes along, millions are swept away by famine; this leaves breathing room for awhile, when the same thing is repeated. Pestilence, war and infanticide also help to thin out the swarming multitude. No law or love of humanity can prevent this law of necessity, in some way or other it will operate and rule where reason does not. Highly civilized nations may abate its cruelties, but it should not be at the expense of their own extinction; this would not be in the interest of humanity, and would not in the end solve the problem.

The test, if applied, would bar out immigrants subject to the influence and control of the Jesuits. This, as a distinction, would be less objectionable than any which should discriminate against nationalities; a distinction of this latter sort would cause great animosity, but a distinction against Jesuits and those of their persuasion, or likely to become subject to their control, would arouse neither wonder nor ill-will among European nations, whether Protestant or Catholic. They would understand it at once and appreciate the situation, for even the most Catholic countries have had experience with Jesuitism, and know that it is wholly inconsistent with a

popular form of government, or with any kind of government except by Jesuits.

Religion is the principal cause of separation between the different races. The difference between the Protestants and Catholics is fundamental. Protestant churches of various kinds may have the foibles and small prejudices, but upon the whole, their aim is purely religious, moral and social. The Catholic church is entirely distinct. Hers is pre-eminently a kingdom of this world; her aim is power and control, and everything in her policy is subservient to this. The religious sentiment in man is cultivated mainly with a view of making it serve as a basis for her power. Education and social development is of consequence only as they fit into her policy. They are neglected in purely Catholic countries, but adopted as defensive measures among Protestants. The church has not abrogated one jot or tittle of her ancient claim. Her plotting for power and control never ceases. It is going on in every country, but is now more especially centered in the United States. It is invidious, restless, unscrupulous and persistent. It has sooner or later brought her into conflict with every government on earth, whether in Protestant or Catholic countries. There can be no peace between the Catholic church and any government that does not acknowledge her claim of supremacy. The conflict may be smoothed over with diplomacy and soft phrases, but it is there all the same, and is an understood matter both at Rome and various capitals.

Catholics may be good and loyal, but can only be so by repudiating and resisting the claims and authority of the church. In Catholic countries, the sentiment of liberty has been the ruling one for the last hundred

years, and the majority are on the side of a liberal government. The tremendous experience of the past has so far sufficed to convince them, that the rule of the priests is not consistent with civil and religious liberty, or the security of life and property. But it is a precarious matter, even in Catholic countries, to depend upon a loyalty that requires Catholics to repudiate and resist the claims and pretentions of the church, considering the indestructibility of the religious sentiment, how easy it may become dominant, and, perverted and misdirected, furnish an occasion for the priests. In Protestant countries, it is practically idle to do so. Catholics have not had the experience of Catholic countries and are not permitted to read history that will inform them. The credit for the advantages of a Protestant civilization, the priests take to themselves, and the fact of Protestantism enables them to work upon the minds of their adherents, to stimulate their prejudices, their sentiment for the church, and keep them in abject submission. The priest's party of "Clericals" include practically all the adherents of the church, and they are a distinct factor in politics. As such they are looked upon by politicians; their support is a commodity in the market to be bought by concessions, etc. Their support can be thus bought but not their disinterested loyalty, for that belongs to Rome alone. How far Rome may go in demanding "concessions", and how far politicians may go in acceding to the demands, is a matter that is studied with skill and care. But the only thing that can stop the church from pushing her demands to the full extent of her claim, is force. Political offices and emoluments may answer to begin with. State appropriations for her denominational institutions may do for a season; a division of the

school fund will next be thought of, but all these will only be steps in the process towards the enforcement of all that is involved in her principle of supreme rule. Plotting, scheming and agressive movements would not cease till this is accomplished. The Catholic church could not be true to herself if she should rest till she had gained all she had lost since the reformation. As long as there is a Protestant to protest against her principles and doctrines, against her claim to universal rule, she must continue the warfare with all the weapons that are at her command. Sooner or later the conflict must come, here as elsewhere. The State would either have to surrender itself or be forced into action. To this it has come in every country where the Catholic church is strong, and in the nature of the case it cannot be otherwise. Force sufficient to overawe and check is the only thing that ever stopped her from pushing onward to the extermination of all opposition, and the only thing she can consistently yield to.

The position of the Catholic church in any country that does not allow her claim of supremacy, is an awkward and unnatural one. She claims the good will of the government with which her principles are unalterably at war. She claims shelter and protection of a government, which, according to her claims and pretensions, are an usurpation, which she is on principle, if not in fact, bound to oppose. If the church is called upon to explain or defend this position, the answer is evasive and equivocative. Now and then a bold spirit will openly acknowledge the situation as it exists, and plainly tells us it means war on principle, and in fact, if they had the power. In no case will they deny the principle that the church ought to be supreme over the civil power, and

has a right to use the civil power for the enforcement of obedience to her will and conformity to her laws. Nor will they under any circumstances repudiate their "holy fathers" who enforced obedience with fire and sword. The best answer the politic ecclesiastics can give, and the which in fact they generally give, is in effect: that although the church is on principle opposed to toleration and religious liberty, and opposed to everything that opposes her principle, yet as a matter of policy she may tolerate. No explanation Rome ever gave, however manifestly, for the purpose of gaining confidence among Protestants, ever went farther than this. The policy of toleration may be adopted for two reasons, first because intolerance might endanger her standing and hurt her chance of gaining converts among Protestants; and secondly, enforcement of the principle may be impossible for want of power. Of course both considerations resolve themselves into this, that she tolerates when she lacks the power to enforce obedience and submission. And as a matter of fact she never yielded the right to Protestants except for this consideration. What power she possesses in Catholic countries she uses to restrict and circumscribe the rights of Protestants as much as the civil power will permit.

Nations like individuals soon forget past experience and have to learn the same lessons over again. In Catholic countries the experience is so recent that it is not forgotten; the church is kept in check by the strong arm of the law. In Protestant countries they call it courage and liberality to forget and ignore the past, which they do not even have the courage to think of soberly, or look at with a mind to realize what it meant. The wily priests are aping the cant of liberalism, and

liberals are transported with hopes of the near conversion of the Catholic church. They are in ecstacy over the jesting, cynical references to liberality made by the priests, and catch at it eagerly as a sign that the world is now about to drop into beautiful harmony at its own accord, because fate and evolution has decreed it. But the Roman ecclesiastics are not fatalists; they do not amuse themselves with theories except at the expense of the Protestants. They do not wait for things to come about in their favor at their own accord. They keep their aim steadily in view, and work for it zealously, incessantly and guardedly. The fatalism of evolution theories is no match for them. Protestants may simper and smile and talk sentiment; Rome will smile back till she has the requisite power, then the tone changes. Rome will never reconcile herself to the results of the reformation. These results were gained only after centuries of bloody wars and persecutions, and the sacrifice of millions of heroes and martyrs on the battlefield and the scaffold. A skeptical and indifferent population, who have substituted for Christianity a sentiment and a theory equally flimsy and superficial, take it for granted that these results, gained at such tremendous cost, will be preserved to them without any effort on their part, but while the theorists, sentimentalists and liberals are flying their kites, Rome is laying the foundation for renewed struggles to regain her ancient power.

There has of late years been unusual stir in the Catholic Church. She has discovered in her system new strength, indicated by gains in England and the United States, which neither she nor the Protestants suspected. In times past she mistrusted her ability to hold her own in the presence of truth and enlightenment. She was

unduly afraid of her own knavery in thinking that her adherents would at once fall away if they got a Bible in their hands or came in contact with a purer form of Christianity. She did not know enough of human nature to present with confidence her errors for acceptance in the presence of truth. But she has learned now that she has little to fear from human nature, or any innate love of truth on the part of man. Her accommodations to his carnal nature count more with him than the truth which is distasteful. So she has boldly put on her best appearance, and challenged Protestantism in the most enlightened countries. Her successes in England and the United States have buoyed her hopes and strengthened her purpose. She has increased her wiles, heightened her zeal and enlarged her efforts. Could she gain one of the great Anglo-Saxon nations and make a large party in the other, it would destroy the balance that now exists between Catholic and Protestants. There would be need of a stronger sentiment in her favor in Catholic countries, but the sentiment of the masses changes readily and she is not without ground for hope. From his lair at the Vatican, the ecclesiastical tiger is narrowly observing the movements of the people of Catholic countries, and watching for an opportunity to spring at the throat of civil and religious liberty. The readiness with which the masses pass from one extreme to the other is understood, and the anarchy, disorders and general discontent may bring about a reaction in favor of religious fanaticism and ecclesiastical control. The nations have had a little time in which to forget their past experience, else they would not flee from anarchy to fall into the hands of the Catholic Church, for the former is a merciful institution compared with the latter. We had better be blown out

of the world at once by the bomb of the anarchist, than be taken out of it piecemeal by the slow tortures of the inquisition; we had better not be under any law, than be under laws that leave us helpless in the hands of our enemies.

Her aim and principle is the same, but her policy is a matter of circumstances. Where there is no hope immediately of forcing her way it is not a matter of policy to keep her principle of supremacy at the front, which alone can be carried by force. It is rather a matter of policy in a Protestant country to keep it out of sight, for it is here an object to gain confidence and it is not readily gained in view of her past history. It is sufficient that her followers are trained to absolute and unquestioned obedience, so that they may be ready for anything at all times. This training of her followers is her immediate concern, and to this end is her policy in the United States mainly directed. The priests are wary and active; they take charge of the immigrants as they arrive, and sequester their children in parochial schools, where they are taught submission to the priests, and unqualified obedience to the church; where they are fed upon Catholic tradition, and history perverted and distorted to hide the truth, in the lurid light of which the Catholic church would look hideous. They are carefully watched, controlled and guarded from outside influence, till they turn out full-fledged fanatics, such as we have seen them in the streets of our own cities; Catholic mobs, their faces distorted by malice and ferocity, exhibiting the spirit that would love to do the deeds of their fathers. And the whole provocation somebody criticising their church, or discussing religious questions in which it was involved. If the reformers of the sixteenth

century had been content to keep their convictions to themselves, there would have been no trouble, neither would there have been any reformation.

We should understand what the Catholic church is, not to incite to petty spite or jealousies which are wholly unprofitable, but that we may take a rational and enlightened view of the situation. Let the nation understand the rules and principles of the church, and deal with her in the light of a fair understanding; as it is done in Catholic countries where no effort is made on the part of either party to slur over the fact of opposition and antipathy. The State stands prepared to enforce its laws over against the church, and the church respects the superior power of the government. Pretentions of peace, harmony and sympathy between the church and a Protestant, or any other government that rejects her claims are silly and hypercritical on both sides. At best there can be only peace founded on policy, and the nation should understand that force alone makes it policy for the Catholic Church to keep the peace. She should be recognized for what she is: a danger to every government that rejects her claim to supreme control, and measures should be taken to abate and minimize the danger as much as possible. A law that would exclude immigrants of Jesuital tendencies, would not violate the rights nor wound the feelings of European nationalities, for they have all had experience with Jesuitism and know what it is. It would interfere with nobody's right to profess and practice his faith, and stay at home and do it. On the contrary, it would press upon them this privilege, or else, South America and Mexico are open to them, where the Catholic Church and the Latin race reign supreme.

Absolute control of immigration is the one means and the only one by which the Anglo-Saxon race in North America can preserve itself and its civilization. The policy of liberalism that refuses to discriminate, must give place to the policy of nationalism, that carefully selects those that will make good citizens, and rigorously excludes those that do not. We want those immigrants that are in sympathy with our civilization and government, as much as we do not want those that are not. The slight increase of native Americans demands this as good policy and a needed contribution to our population. The nationalities of northern Europe kindred to the Anglo-Saxon race, are the only ones that can be depended on to make Americans. They will not come here if the country is overrun by aliens of other races. They will not work in competition with them, nor accept the chances they offer for life and security. The proof of this is that immigrants of these nationalities have decreased in number in proportion as those of the other class have increased. They are now rather leaving our shores for home, but the aliens are pouring in unceasingly. We have to choose between them; we can have those that are properly speaking our own, or those that are hostile in every instinct of their mental and moral make up. A tax put upon immigrants indiscriminately, or any measure of that sort, would not improve the quality, and would therefore not be in harmony with a national policy. It would be cowardly to deny ourselves the right to receive those that would be a benefit to us, for the sake of an excuse for rejecting those we do not want. Any policy that refuses to discriminate between the two classes is cowardly, unreasonable and unpatriotic. Immigrants that are a danger to

our national life we could not afford to take at any price. We could afford to tax ourselves to encourage immigrants that would add strength to our national life and character. We should encourage them, not because they need America, but because America needs them. Let alone, the aliens would even now by reason of their greater natural increase in time outnumber Americans. The economic conditions of our country that divide the population between the employer of large numbers of men and the employe, are in their favor; they have only to underbid our own workmen to secure room for growth and increase. The constructive genius of Americans paves the way for them, it does the planning and thinking, it gives them chance to take root and grow, till they are able to plan for themselves. The owners of wealth will derive a temporal benefit from the cheapening of labor, but it will be more than counterbalanced by the increased insecurity. Their possession of the wealth of the country is mere nominal; they can keep it only as the masses consent to it. The aliens now coming to our shores are not negroes by any means, they are of a positive type and of warlike races. There will be no more affinity between the Anglo-Saxon, the Latin, the Celt, the Slav in this country than in other countries. There is more to keep them apart; they do not even have the tradition of a common native land as elsewhere, and the United States is so great a prize, that races and religions will find it worth the while to exert themselves to the utmost to win it. Anyone may even now read this in the signs of the times.

When a ship at sea is in danger from a leak, the first thing is to stop the influx of water. Americans

have it now in their power to stop the influx of strangers that threaten to submerge them in the waves of their immigration. The power will not stay with them very long at the present rate, they had better use it while they possess it. It will take an effort to break resolutely with past tradition and a past policy, even though this policy has no reference to present conditions. It is easier to drift than to steer our course; easier to allow circumstances to rule us than to rule them, but we have to undertake to rule circumstances in this matter, or become their victims.

If Americans should make up their minds to take the destiny of the nation into their own hands, and determine it by determining the character of the people that is to occupy the country, then this would hasten the inevitable, that is—a reunion with Canada. Our southern frontier might be guarded, but the northern of three thousand miles would be an open gate, through which immigration would pour in scarcely diminished numbers. We have already had a proof of this in our effort to quarantine against infectious disease. The right to Canada would have to be settled on its merits, even if force had to be used. That the actual or moral right lies with the United States, cannot be questioned. England has the right of conquest which is no moral or actual right, she could not find fault if she lost by force what she has taken by force. The actual or moral right must be based first on the material welfare of the people concerned: that the unnatural border-line of three thousand miles, with its row of custom houses, is a serious hindrance to the material development of both countries is evident, and as an inconvenience in every way it will increase continually. The actual or moral right should also be

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